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JAYS IN LAST, GIBBONS TAKES THE BLAST

BLUE JAYS MANAGER FEELS THE HEAT OF PLAYOFF-STARVED FANS WHO BLAME HIM FOR TORONTO'S LACKLUSTRE SEASON

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Metro's look at TV season continues

Bizarre Foods are on this fall's TV menu & Queen Latifah's coming to daytime

PAGE 21-22

Revenge is tweet among Durham police

Seems a detective did diss ombudsman on Twitter, just not the one who was blamed

PAGE 4

Another senator bites the dust

Veteran politician Mac Harb hands in resignation, pays back all questionable expenses

PAGE 6

Sisters to pay uncle $125K for alleging sex abuse

'Chilling effect.' Lawyers fear ruling will discourage future abuse victims from coming forward

A Superior Court judge has ordered two Ancaster sisters to pay their uncle $125,000 in libel damages after they accused him of sexually assaulting them as children.

It's a decision lawyers say has sent a "chilling effect" through legal circles and will discourage sexual-abuse victims from coming forward in the future.

The sisters, Patricia and Sarah Vanderkooy, now in their 30s, say the abuse occurred during sleepovers at their uncle's farm in Simcoe in the early '80s, when they were four and six years old, according to the judge's written decision.

In 2006, they confronted their uncle, Jack Vanderkooy, and asked him for an apology. After he refused, they wrote a series of emails detailing their allegations to family and friends.

Judge Andrew Goodman wrote that the sisters "did not like their uncle," and sent the emails "in order to vindicate their actions or validate their historical claims of abuse."

Philip Tunley, the sisters' lawyer, confirmed that they did not file a police report and that criminal charges have not been laid.

It's "very rare" to see victims of alleged sexual assault found liable for defamation, said Elizabeth Grace, a lawyer who specializes in sexual abuse, but was not involved in this case.

"Predominately, the courts have wanted to encourage people coming forward with their allegations of abuse," Grace said. "This decision gives added weight to the concern that (our clients) may face a defamation suit.... It's going to have a chilling effect."

Contacted at his home in St. Thomas, Vanderkooy said he was relieved by the decision but added that it was a bittersweet victory because the litigation "has done a lot of damage in our family."

Vanderkooy acknowledged that the courts have to find a balance between encouraging victims of sexual abuse to come forward and protecting people from false accusation but said "it's my perspective that this balance has tipped in the opposite direction."

"This case shows that vindication is possible," he said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

MUMFORD CALLS US HOME

Marcus Mumford, lead singer for Mumford and Sons — the planet's most popular folk-rockers — wowed a sold-out house at the Molson Canadian Amphitheatre Monday night. The 2013 Grammy winners for best album (Babel) delivered a 90-minute set of fan favourites such as Lover of the Light, I Will Wait and Whispers in the Dark. TOM PANDI/FOR METRO

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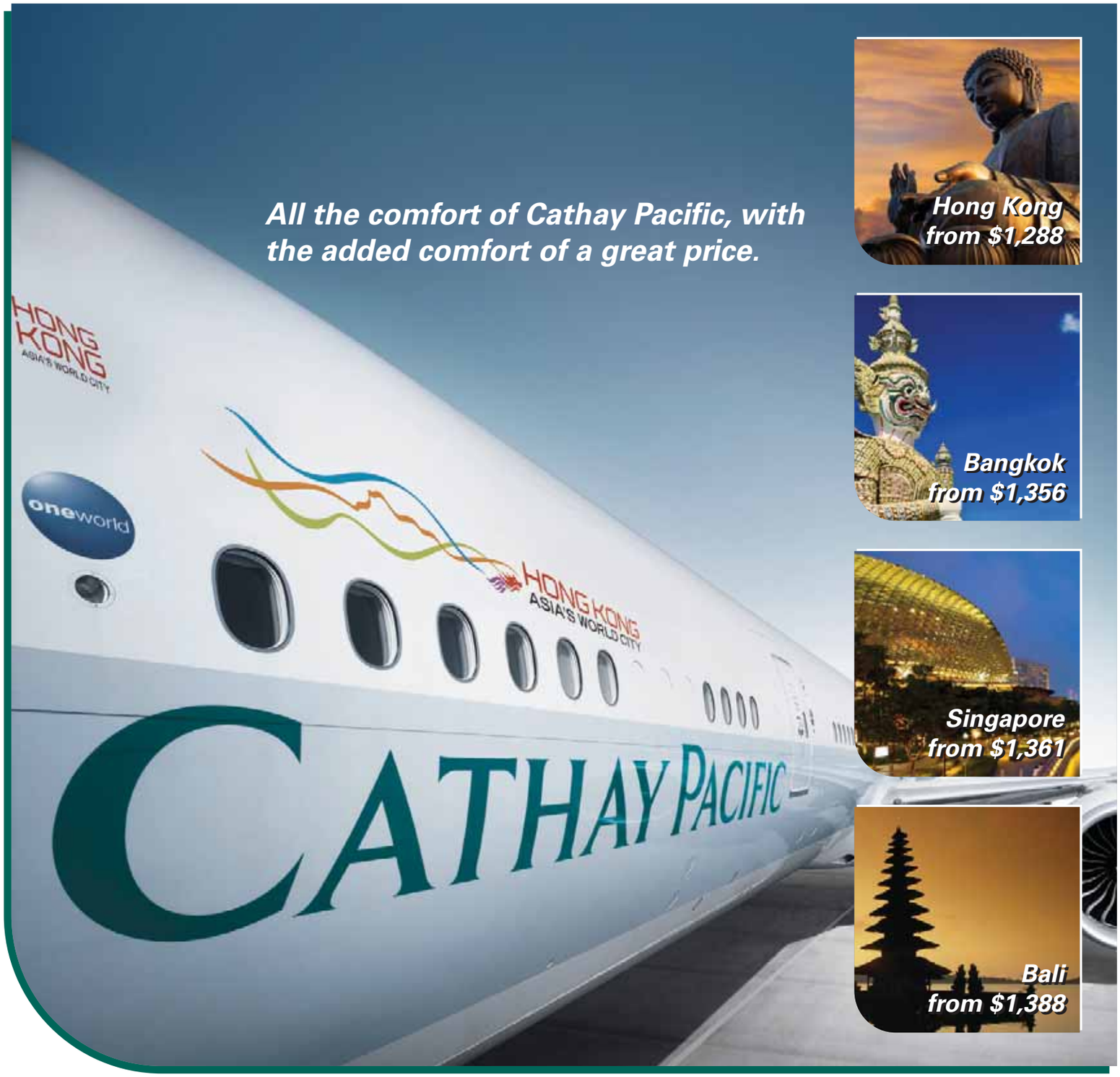
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Richmond Hill

Man accused of stunt-flying

A man has been charged with stunt-flying an airplane over residential neighbourhoods in Richmond Hill.

York Region police received several calls regarding a single-engine Cessna 172 flying erratically over neighbourhoods and parks at about 5 p.m. Sunday.

The plane landed safely at Markham Airport, on Highway 48 north of Elgin Mills Road.

After an investigation, York police alleged the lone pilot had rented the plane with plans to stunt-fly it over a friend's house.

Christian Nardoni, 26, of Richmond Hill, is charged with dangerous operation of an aircraft.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Shooting fallout

Use-of-force rules to see changes

In the wake of the high-profile police killing of 18-year-old Sammy Yatim, the provincial body that governs police use of force is set to make an announcement about options available to frontline officers.

It's not yet known what changes the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services will announce Tuesday. Wider deployment of Tasers, while controversial, has long been called for by Toronto police brass and others. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Sammy Yatim

Mayor loses bid for Etobicoke byelection

Despite vehement opposition from Mayor Rob Ford, city council voted 22-11 Monday to appoint someone to fill the council vacancy created when Doug Holyday recently won provincial office. The move saves taxpayers the $225,000 cost of a byelection but deprives the citizens of Ward 3, Etobicoke Centre, of their choice of representative. Coun. Doug Ford decried "the sense of arrogance and entitlement that these councillors have down here that they're in charge."

KEITH BEATY/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Ex-Ford staffer says he approached cops

City hall. Mark Towhey breaks his silence on crack-cocaine scandal

Quoted

"The mayor made the decision to fire me, so at the end of the day, why he chose to fire me is really a question to ask him."

Mark Towhey, Mayor Rob Ford's ex-chief of staff

Mayor Rob Ford's former chief of staff confirmed Monday that he contacted the police while serving as Ford's top aide.

"It's fair to say that I initiated contact with the police when I came into some information that I thought may be useful to them," Mark Towhey told Newstalk 1010 host Jim Richards.

Torstar News Service reported in a May article that Towhey had approached the police. Towhey had not spoken publicly about the article, or anything else related to Ford's crack-cocaine scandal, until his conversation with Richards.

Torstar cited sources who said Towhey went to the police after another Ford staffer, director of operations and logistics David Price, asked him what they would do if, "hypothetically," someone told them where they could find the video that appears to show the mayor smoking crack.

When Richards put this version of events to Towhey, Towhey said: "Most of the conversations we have in the mayor's office are pretty confidential, and I think that's probably one that, if it did happen, would stay that way."

Ford denies the video exists and denies he is a crack user.

Asked by Richards if he believes there is a video, Towhey said, "I don't know if there's a video."

Torstar reported this month that police are investigating attempts by Ford associates to obtain the video. Detectives have interviewed or tried to interview several Ford aides and people involved in a 2012 incident in which Ford was escorted out of a bar.

Ford fired Towhey on May 23, a week after Torstar and the U.S. website Gawker published articles about the video.

Towhey said he spoke to police once while he worked for Ford and once after he was fired. He would not address reports that Ford fired him after he urged him to seek help for substance-abuse issues.

Ford's spokesmen did not respond to a request for comment. Towhey declined further comment. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Ombudsman fingered wrong officer as Twitter culprit

Cop on cop vitriol. Tweeter formerly known as Joe Mayo, formerly known as Scott Dennis, was neither

JESSICA SMITH
jessica.smith@metronews.ca

Ontario Ombudsman André Marin was right that a member of the Durham Regional Police Service had called him a "douche bag" on Twitter — but he publicly named and shamed the wrong detective, according to the Durham police.

Marin claimed the person operating the "Joe Mayo" Twitter account that called him a member of al-Qaida and a "douche bag" was Durham Region police Det.-Const. Scott Dennis. Marin tweeted the officer's name, asked if he was on duty while tweeting, tweeted out his salary, which he found on the "sunshine list," and took questions about him at a press conference.

In fact, the detective who was actually behind the account had been using it as a parody account to mock Dennis without his knowledge, according to the DRPS.

DRPS Chief Const. Mike Ewles said he decided to keep the detective behind the account on active duty because the incident was non-violent and it wasn't directed at a member of the public. The detective's name won't be released until he appears at a disciplinary hearing. However, at press time, news broke that DRPS say they will now charge the officer responsible.

Process

"One of my biggest concerns is that (Scott Dennis) was named without any due diligence."
DRPS Chief Const. Mike Ewles

"One of my biggest concerns is that (Scott Dennis) was named without any due diligence on the part of the Ombudsman or any of his staff, or even contacting us and letting us do our investigation first. It was out there before anyone knew it and unfortunately, to the detriment of Det.-Const. Dennis," said Ewles.

Dennis has received nasty emails and phone calls and has taken some time off because of the controversy, but is back at work now.

Marin wouldn't say how he identified the tweeter, but by using records of the Twitter account saved online, Metro found the Joe Mayo Twitter account had previously used the handle @DET3091 and the Twitter name "Scott Dennis" and changed to Joe Mayo with the handle @joeymayo12 before harassing the Ombudsman.

Scott Dennis
@DET3091
Leafs and Jays fan, rocket ship builder, pizza lover and part-time worker
Centre of the Universe, Canada
A screengrab of the Twitter account impersonating Det.-Const. Scott Dennis. METRO

Marin released a statement Monday evening stating that the account had "featured a series of hateful, malicious and bigoted messages personally directed at (him)" and said he was prepared to co-operate with the DRPS in their investigation.

"Regrettably, it appears that a Durham police officer not only personally attacked public officials on Twitter, but impersonated a colleague in doing so — hiding behind the name and badge number of Det.-Const. Scott Dennis. Both Det.-Const. Dennis and I were duped by this disgraceful, malicious act," he said in the statement.

T.O. blogger survives on social media freebies

Zach Bussey enjoys a swanky five-day condo stay. KEITH BEATY/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

You are what you Tweet.

Or at least that's the case for Zach Bussey, who's been surviving for the past eight months on social media alone.

The 27-year-old is in the middle of an experiment in which he feeds, clothes and amuses himself solely through promotions and sponsorships he can find online. He aims to live for a year off of freebies — from food to shirts to toaster ovens — companies send him in exchange for mentions on his blog or social media accounts.

The perks haven't been as plentiful as he'd hoped.

"There are many things missing from my life," says the Torontonian, who's been spending nights on a foam camping mattress in lieu of a bed sponsorship. "The project has really made me more of a minimalist."

Since Thursday, however, Bussey's life has taken a maximalist turn. A condo developer has put him up in a swanky penthouse by the Humber Bay for five days. In return, he has to blog about his experience.

Best. Gift. Ever.

"Charmin sent me a big box of toilet tissue early on. I'm down to my last few rolls. I don't know if there'll be a refill." Zach Bussey

"I've gotten used to waking up stiff, so it's been nice to sleep in a real bed," says Bussey, who suffers from scoliosis.

The idea arose from the many hand-outs Bussey, a professional blogger, received for product reviews. He decided to empty his Danforth Ave. apartment and test whether hand-outs could keep him alive for a year. He wants to donate it all to charity once it's over.

Bussey set aside $12,000 to cover rent but stopped collecting money from his blog, so as to subsist only on "pure products" and "pure experience."

So far, that experience has been taxing and some days he eats only Nutella and nectarines. "I haven't been on a date all year," he says.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Vets finally recognized for being the bomb

Ceremony. Veterans honoured nearly 70 years after Second World War

On Monday, former Royal Canadian Air Force navigator Henry James Hewett and 13 other GTA veterans became the first bombers to be recognized belatedly for the work they did in similarly sticky situations — and the sacrifices they made.

Of about 50,000 Canadians who served in bomber crews during the war, nearly 11,000 died.

The handful of veterans was the first to be presented with new Bomber Command Bar, to be worn on the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal awarded to those who served 18 months during the Second World War, during a ceremony at the Canadian Forces College in Toronto.

Minister of Veterans Affairs Julian Fantino personally thanked each veteran and said still more veterans, or their surviving family members, are coming forward to claim the bar.

The bar was announced over a year ago, around the same time as a memorial for the bomber command was unveiled in England. The bombers were long unrecognized because of the nature of their mission, which grew controversial after the war was won.

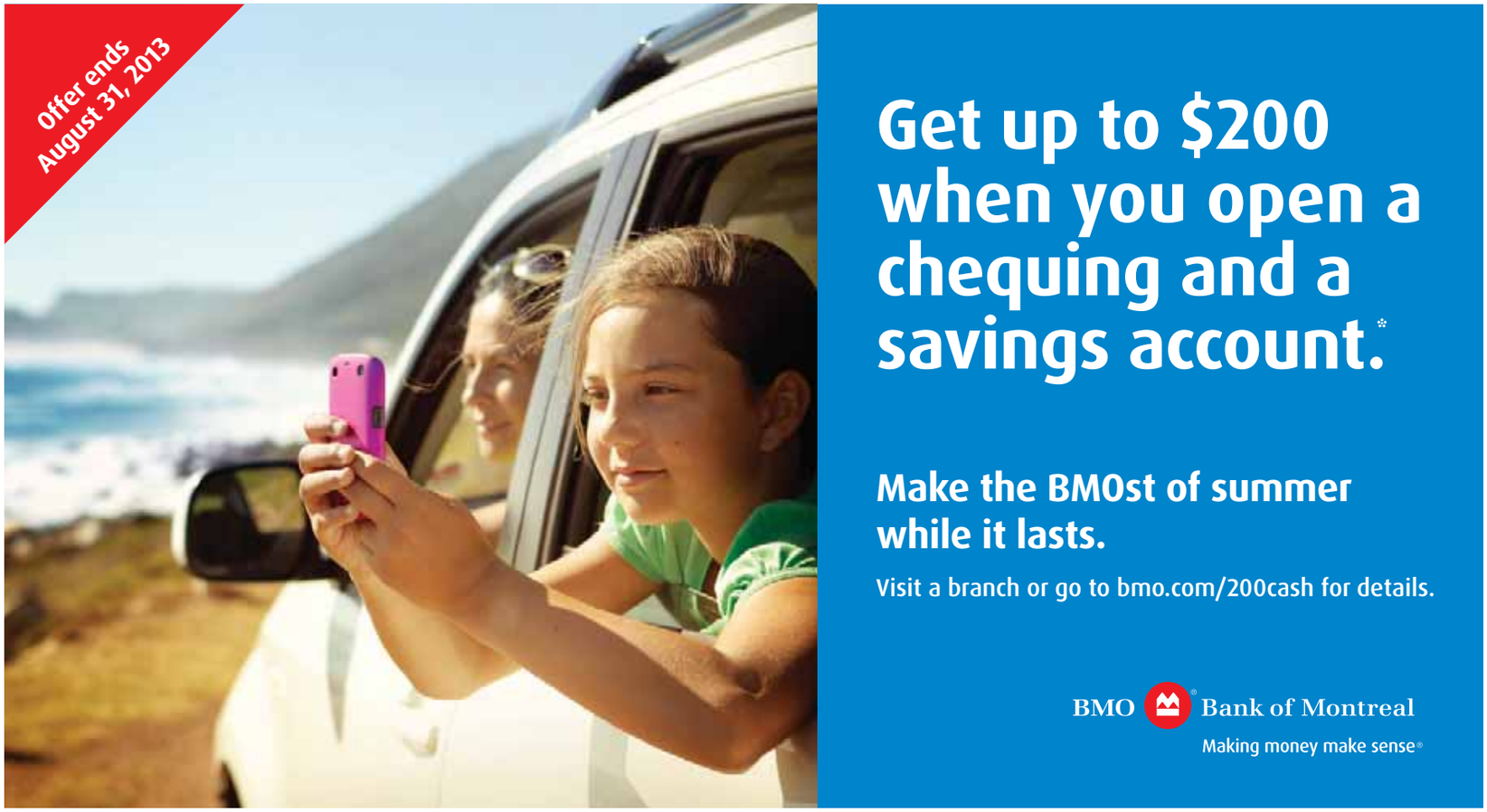
Hewett sat for a while after the ceremony, just watching fellow veterans celebrate.

"I feel gratified," he said. "I mean, we're not glory hunters, we don't want to be praised all that much. We just want to be appreciated."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Pick Me Up at the Beach, artist urges

Toronto artist Elizabeth Berry with a painting she recently created depicting a scene of garbage at Woodbine Beach. Berry lives in the Beach and is disturbed by the amount of litter that's being left behind. The painting has been coupled with the slogan Pick Me Up at the Beach and has also been made into a T-shirt. TARA WALTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE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West end

Couple awake to prowler inside their home

Toronto police are investigating possible connections between a break-in that occurred Monday morning in the city's west end and a similar incident last week.

Police say a couple awoke at about 5 a.m. to find a man standing over their bed.

Officers are searching for the suspect in the area (near Weston Road and Rogers Road.)

The suspect allegedly entered the couple's home through an unlocked door or window, and nothing was reported taken.

Const. Tony Vella would not say if the break-in is related to an incident last Thursday when a woman was grabbed by a man through the window of her home (on Rima Court).

But Vella says police are investigating links between this incident and similar incidents in the west end over the past few months.

680 NEWS/THE CANADIAN PRESS

North Toronto

No charges laid in death of boy, 3, pulled from pool

Police say no criminal charges will be laid in the drowning death of a three-year-old boy who was pulled from a swimming pool in north Toronto over the weekend.

The incident happened at a barbecue in a condo (near Don Mills Road and Lawrence Avenue East) on Saturday afternoon, where about 14 people were attending.

Police say several children were in the pool, with the mother of the victim on the patio.

When the mother went to the bathroom, her three-year-old son got into the pool without a flotation device.

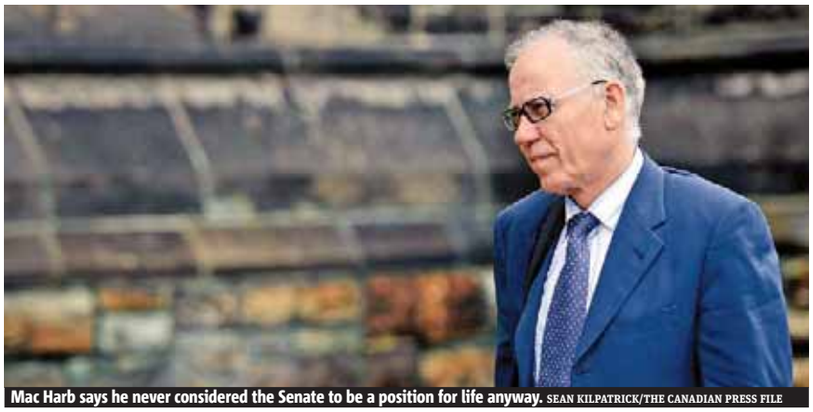
Police say the boy had been under water for about three minutes before he was pulled out.

Officers performed CPR when they arrived, but the boy was later pronounced dead in hospital.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Harb resigns from Senate, gives Liberals clean slate

Retains pensions. Harb borrows $230,000 to pay back the entirety of his disputed expenses


Mac Harb says he never considered the Senate to be a position for life anyway. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Veteran Liberal politician Mac Harb handed his former caucus a gift just before its annual summer retreat, resigning from the upper chamber and paying back all his questionable Senate expenses.

That now leaves only three former Conservative senators hanging on in the red chamber, despite pressure to resign over a raft of inappropriate financial claims and connected police probes.

Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau had faced criticism from his rivals for saying he would welcome Harb back into the caucus once he settled the issue of his living expenses.

That problem appears to have been solved in time for the Liberal get-together in P.E.I. beginning Tuesday, where financial transparency will be the main focus.

Harb had been fighting the Senate in court over its assessment that he had improperly claimed to be living primarily in a home outside of the national capital region. That complicated legal battle has now been abandoned.

"I have been contemplating retirement for some time as I personally never considered the Senate to be a lifetime position," Harb said in a statement Monday.

"These past few months have been extremely difficult for me and my family and caused me to evaluate what more I could contribute in the circumstances."

Harb says he sent the Senate a cheque for $189,166, bringing his total reimbursement to $231,649 or the entirety of his living-related expenses.

Records show Harb has borrowed $230,000 by using mortgages against four properties to get loans from a numbered company owned by an Ottawa lawyer and businessman.

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation quickly pointed out Monday that Harb will still be able to draw from healthy MP and Senate pensions now that he has retired.

Former Liberal Sen. Raymond Lavigne, convicted of fraud and breach of trust in 2011, retired before the Senate was able to strip him of his seat. As a result, he was still able to collect his pensions, an estimated $80,000 annually. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Senate scandal

Tories should pay for audits: Mulcair

NDP Leader Tom Mulcair says the Conservative party should pick up the cost of auditing a pair of former Tory senators who filed improper expense claims.

Mulcair made the comments Monday as he highlighted his "Roll up the Red Carpet" tour, part of a campaign to publicize his party's support for Senate abolition. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Wireless

Competition best sparked by foreign giants, says report

If the federal government truly wants healthy wireless competition, a report says it should do away with limits on foreign ownership.

The Fraser Institute analysis argues there is no evidence that handicapping the big Canadian companies in the spectrum auction will improve efficient competition. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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It's the Bell Back to School Event!

UN experts inspect scene of alleged chemical attack in Syria

Damascus. Team collects samples, conducts interviews after surviving sniper attack on way to site

UN experts collected samples and testimony from Syrian doctors and victims of an alleged chemical weapons attack Monday following a treacherous journey through government and rebel-held territory, where their convoy was hit by snipers.

As U.S. officials said there was very little doubt that Syria used chemical weapons and Western powers stepped up calls for swift military action, President Bashar Assad's government vowed to defend itself against any international attack, warning that such an intervention would ignite turmoil across the region.

Snipers opened fire on the UN convoy, hitting one of the vehicles carrying a team on its way to investigate the Aug. 21 incident.

Martin Nesirky, a spokesman for UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, said one of the UN vehicles was "deliberately shot at" in the buffer zone between rebel- and government-controlled territory, adding that the team was safe.

Activists said the inspectors eventually arrived in Moadamiyeh, a suburb of Damascus and one of the areas where the alleged chemical attack occurred.

In videos uploaded by the Moadamiyeh media office, UN inspectors were seen interviewing hospital patients.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In this image taken from amateur video posted online, a presumed UN staff member appears to measure and photograph a canister on Monday in the suburb of Moadamiyeh in Damascus, Syria, where the Syrian regime allegedly used chemical weapons. UN experts collected samples and testimony from doctors and victims of the alleged attack on Monday following a treacherous journey through government- and rebel-held territory. MOADAMIYEH MEDIA OFFICE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

'Dangerous new phase'

"Canada believes the only way to halt the bloodshed in Syria is through a political solution.... However, we understand that this solution is becoming more and more difficult as the crisis enters a very dangerous new phase."

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird, who called Monday's attack on a UN convoy "absolutely abhorrent."

Evidence of attack is 'undeniable': Kerry

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry declared Monday that there was "undeniable" evidence of a large-scale chemical weapons attack in Syria, toughening the Obama administration's criticism of President Bashar Assad's regime and outlining a justification for possible U.S. military action.

Kerry, speaking to reporters at the State Department, said last week's alleged attack was a "moral obscenity" that "should shock the conscience" of the world.

"The indiscriminate slaughter of civilians, the killing of women and children and innocent bystanders by chemical weapons is a moral obscenity. By any standard, it is inexcusable and ... it is undeniable," said Kerry, the highest-ranking U.S. official to confirm the attack in the Damascus suburbs that activists say killed hundreds of people.

"This international norm cannot be violated without consequences," he added.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Syria's ally responds

Russia: No proof regime responsible

Nations calling for military action against Syria have no proof the Syrian government is behind an alleged chemical weapons attack, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Monday.

Lavrov said the countries have assumed the role of "both investigators and the UN Security Council" in probing the incident.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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UN says U.S. has some explaining to do over allegations of spying

The United Nations said Monday that it will contact the United States about reports that the National Security Agency hacked UN internal communications, and the world body emphasized that international treaties protect its offices and all diplomatic missions from interference, spying and eavesdropping.

The German magazine Der Spiegel reported Sunday that documents it obtained from American leaker Edward Snowden show the NSA secretly monitored the UN's internal video-conferencing system by decrypting it last year. In three weeks, Der Spiegel said, the NSA increased the number of decrypted communications at the UN from 12 to 458.

Der Spiegel also reported that the NSA installed bugs in the European Union's office building in Washington and infiltrated the EU's computer network.

UN spokesman Farhan Haq said Monday that the United Nations will "reach out" to U.S. officials about the reports of eavesdropping, as it has in the past when such allegations have been raised.

Haq added that "the inviolability of diplomatic missions, including the United Nations and other international organizations, whose functions are protected by the relevant international conventions like the Vienna Convention, has been well-established international law."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vienna Convention

The 1961 Vienna Convention regulates diplomatic issues and status among nations and international organizations.

- Among other things, it says a host country cannot search diplomatic premises or seize its documents or property.
- It also says the host government must permit and protect free communication between the diplomats of the mission and their home country.
- However, wiretapping and eavesdropping have been rampant for decades, most dramatically between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

Indonesia

Top clerics call for Miss World pageant to be cancelled

One of Indonesia's most influential Islamic groups is urging the government to cancel the Miss World pageant scheduled for next month, saying the exposure of skin by women in a competition violates Muslim teachings, an official said Monday.

Senior clerics met this month to respond to protests from some groups over Indonesia's hosting of the event, even after organizers agreed to cut the bikini competition and outfit contestants in more conservative sarongs, Indonesian Ulema Council chairman Amidan Shaberah said.

The pageant is scheduled to be held partly on the resort island of Bali, with the final round on Sept. 28 near the capital, Jakarta.

Adjie S. Soeratmadjie of RCTI, the official broadcaster and local organizer of the event, said meanwhile that Miss Israel had dropped out of the competition, but declined to give the reason.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A poster hangs in an open wooden garage-style "sex box" in Zurich, Switzerland, that officially opened for business Monday. Zurich is experimenting with the drive-in facilities to relocate prostitution. JOHN HEILPRIN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Zurich thinking inside the box

Drive-in 'sex boxes'. Swiss city experiments with ways to relocate prostitution away from busy downtown area

No car, no sex.

That's the rule for an experiment Zurich launched on Monday to make prostitution less of a public nuisance and safer for women.

Switzerland has long been famous for its mountaineering, chocolate and precision watches, but a lesser known aspect is its legal prostitution since 1942, for which its largest city is one of the main centres in Europe.

Fashionably teak-coloured open wooden garages, popularly called "sex boxes" by the Swiss media, will be open for business for drive-in customers. The several dozen sex workers who are expected to make it their new hub will stand along a short road in a small, circular park for clients to choose from and negotiate with.

The publicly funded facilities — open all night and located away from the city centre — include bathrooms, lockers, small café tables and a laundry and shower. Men won't have to worry about video surveillance cameras, but the sex workers — who will need a permit and pay a small tax — will be provided with a panic button and on-site social workers trained to look after them.

On Saturday, several hundred residents, including many women, flocked to the only "open house" that Zurich will offer to give the public a better idea of how its taxpayer money has been used.

Most of the visitors said they came out of curiosity and haven't really come to terms with the idea, but hope it will at least improve safety. Others were amazed and a bit amused that a whole group of strangers would spend a rainy afternoon openly discussing professional sex.

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Activist shakes up Moscow campaign

From blogosphere to inner sphere? Anti-corruption blogger gaining traction against incumbent in upcoming mayoral election

Alexei Navalny, an anti-corruption blogger and a leader of the Russian protest movement, embraces his wife Yulia after he was released last month. Navalny was sentenced to five years on embezzlement charges, but was released the day after his conviction in what many have seen as an effort to legitimize the mayoral race. DMITRY LOVETSKY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A motley gaggle of hipsters, mothers with children and two babushkas with hair dyed bright red gather to listen to something they haven't heard in over a decade: a stump speech for Moscow mayor.

Alexei Navalny, an anti-corruption blogger who has become the best known face of Russia's protest movement, is trying to take his following offline and into the street, waging a traditional campaign to win voters outside his base of the young and web-savvy.

Navalny has little hope of defeating incumbent Sergei Sobyanin — but polls show his star is rising. And if he gets a big chunk of the vote, the Kremlin will face pressure to show leniency over his five-year prison sentence on embezzlement charges, and the grassroots protest movement that fizzled out after Vladimir Putin's return to the presidency last year may gain new wind.

Navalny was sentenced last month but was released a day later in what many have described as an effort to legitimize the mayoral race and ensure that Sobyanin — who was appointed as mayor and is seen as a possible successor to Putin — is regarded as an elected politician with widespread support.

Sobyanin, meanwhile, is playing the regal incumbent: Throughout the campaign, he has been all but invisible, allowing the drone of jackhammers or whiff of fresh paint that are signs of a Moscow makeover to remind voters of who's in charge.

Despite his almost invisible candidacy, Sobyanin is genuinely well-liked for the changes he's brought to Moscow. He has poured a yearly budget of approximately $54 billion US into the city's parks and cultural institutions, although other promises to tackle traffic and parking have been lagging.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

China. American held on prostitution suspicion amid crackdown on bloggers

Police have detained a Chinese-American venture capitalist on suspicion of visiting a prostitute in Beijing as authorities crack down on bloggers who have posted sensitive material on China's already heavily restricted Internet.

Charles Xue, who has more than 12 million followers on the Twitter-like Sina Weibo, was detained on Friday evening in a Beijing neighbourhood along with a woman, according to police and state media on Sunday.

The naturalized American citizen regularly reposts reform-minded content and makes comments on other issues including China's air quality and food safety. The People's Daily on Monday reminded the country's "big Vs" — popular bloggers whose social media profiles are verified as genuine — that they "should be careful what information they convey ... and use their right to expression responsibly."

Many famous Chinese, from pop stars to business tycoons, have amassed huge followings on social media and at times post material that the government doesn't like, such as calling attention to social injustices and questioning government policies. This month, Internet censors called popular microbloggers to meetings and asked them to agree to standards, including keeping social order, in a move observers have said has a chilling effect on public discourse.

State media have also accused some microbloggers of undermining socialism and promoting Western values through lies and negative news.

Xue's celebrity name, Xue Manzi, shot to the top of the most-searched for terms after his detention was announced.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Great gall of China

Xue's arrest follows a string in recent days of people who triggered scandals online.

- **Suspicion of spreading rumours.** On Friday, police detained an investigative reporter who alleged on his microblog that a senior government official was negligent with his public duties.
- **Suspicion of extortion.** Also detained is blogger Zhou Lubao, who initiated a campaign against an official who wore expensive watches that he wouldn't have been able to afford on his salary.
- **More extortion.** Blogger Zhu Ruifeng triggered a scandal last year when he released a video of an official having sex with a woman hired by property developers allegedly in an elaborate extortion scheme.

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PQ minorities plan takes a step forward

Religious symbols ban. Charter of Quebec Values restricts public servants' wearing of veils, turbans, etc.

The Parti Québécois' controversial minorities plan took a big step toward becoming a reality as the party holding the likely swing vote backed major parts of it Monday.

Coalition Leader Francois Legault said judges, police officers and elementary- and secondary-school teachers should be restricted from wearing religious symbols like veils, hijabs and turbans.

Legault's vote is key because the Parti Québécois has only a parliamentary minority and needs support from one of the two main opposition parties to pass its Charter of Quebec Values.

Premier Pauline Marois expressed pleasure at the news.

"I'm happy Mr. Legault is ready to discuss and debate this," the PQ premier said Monday. She was asked about the subject during a news conference where she offered details about a $60 million reconstruction fund for the devastated town of Lac-Mégantic.

"I hope we have a serene, harmonious debate so that we can collectively draw some conclusions that allow us to live better together. That's what we want."

The Coalition's position doesn't go quite as far as the PQ's.

Medical professionals and daycare workers would be exempt under the CAQ proposal. So would public-sector workers who don't hold a position of authority.

"What we say also is that we should exclude religious signs for employees being in authority, like judges, policemen and teachers, because we think that teachers, they have in front of them children in a vulnerable position. But, that's it," Legault said in Quebec City.

A poll released Monday said 57 per cent of Quebec's population agree with the idea.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quebec Premier Pauline Marois speaks during a news conference in Lac-Mégantic, Que., Monday.
GRAHAM HUGHES/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Plugging Fukushima's toxic-water leak

Japanese Trade Minister Toshimitsu Motegi, right, inspects storage tanks at the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear plant at Okuma in Fukushima prefecture, northern Japan, Monday. Motegi pledged urgent action to curb leaks of radiation-contaminated water from the crippled nuclear plant. He told reporters that lax maintenance by the plant's operator was largely to blame for leaks of water from storage tanks surrounding the plant on Japan's northeastern coast, which suffered triple meltdowns after the massive earthquake and tsunami in 2011. KYODO NEWS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

West Bank. Palestinians claim peace talks called off after protesters killed

Palestinian officials said they called off a planned round of peace talks Monday after Israeli soldiers killed three protesters during clashes following an arrest raid in the West Bank.

But in comments that suggested the meeting had gone ahead as planned, U.S. State Department spokeswoman Marie Harf said that "no meetings have been cancelled. We've been clear that the two parties are engaged in serious and sustained negotiations."

Israeli officials refused to comment.

The violence, the deadliest incident in the area in years, dealt a blow to U.S.-led peace efforts, which resumed last month after a nearly five-year break. Palestinian officials have accused the Israelis of using the process as a cover to build new settlements. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fernand. Landslides caused by tropical storm kill 13 in eastern Mexico

Landslides triggered by torrential rains dumped by the remnants of Tropical Storm Fernand killed at least 13 people in Veracruz state, authorities said Monday as the storm weakened to a tropical depression and carried heavy rains inland over eastern Mexico.

Nine people died in the town of Yecuatla, three in the port city of Tuxpan and one more in the town of Atzalan, Veracruz Gov. Javier Duarte said.

A landslide of rock and mud swept onto four homes in the village of Roca de Oro, which is part of the town of Yecuatla, killing nine people in their sleep before dawn Monday.

Duarte advised residents to continue to take precautionary measures since the tropical depression continued to cause rain. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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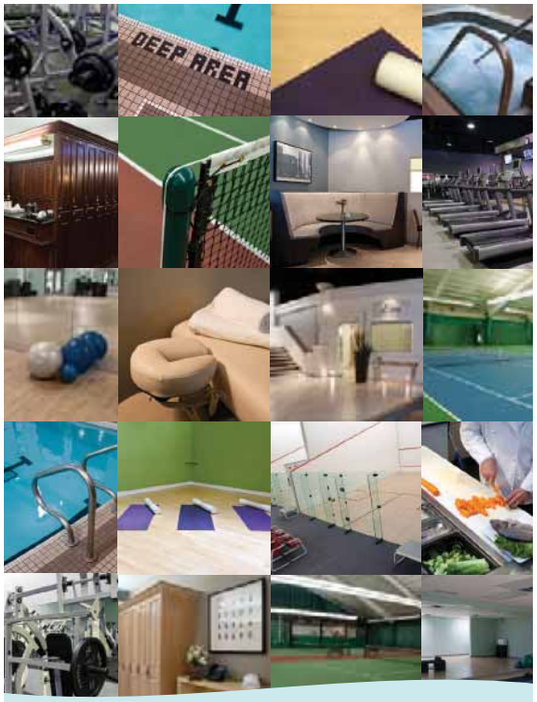

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Activists leave Russian waters after alleged threats

This image made available by environmental organization Greenpeace shows the Greenpeace ship Arctic Sunrise entering the Northern Sea Route off Russia's coastline to protest against Arctic oil drilling on Saturday. WILL ROSE/GREENPEACE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Choppy waters ahead.

Greenpeace's plan for a peaceful protest upended after gunfire threats, says Canadian crew member

A Greenpeace icebreaker that entered Russia's Arctic without permission to protest offshore energy exploration is leaving after being threatened with gunfire by that country's coast guard.

"It was repeated several times in open conversation that they were threatening that if we didn't leave the Northern Sea Route that they would fire on our ship," Christy Ferguson, a Canadian crew member on the Arctic Sunrise, steaming back to Norwegian waters, said Monday.

Russian officials weren't immediately available for comment.

The vessel entered Russian waters late Friday to witness and protest offshore energy exploration in that country's north.

Offshore Arctic exploration is controversial because there are no proven, reliable methods of cleaning oil spills from ice-choked, stormy seas. Seismic exploration by Russian companies and western multinationals is being conducted in areas that include marine national parks and other protected areas. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Thorny topic

While Greenpeace did back down eventually, it didn't leave empty handed, shoring up support for its cause and shining a spotlight on offshore energy exploration by Russia.

- Despite not being able to observe the seismic activity and carry out their protest, Christy Ferguson, a Canadian crew member on the Arctic Sunrise, said the trip was revealing. "We came here to expose preparations for oil drilling and what we ended up exposing was that, and something else — the efforts of the Russian authorities to defend oil interests."
- The Arctic Sunrise is registered in the Netherlands and the Dutch government has expressed support.
- Arctic international law expert Michael Byers said the legality of the Russian actions is murky. He said that while Greenpeace was operating outside territorial Russian waters, international law does give Arctic nations strong pollution prevention jurisdiction out to 200 nautical miles.

Acts of mischief

People dressed as zombies for protest go rogue

Police in Kingston are seeking a horde of badly behaved zombies after several incidents during a protest march.

The costumed marchers were part of a zombie march on the evening of July 27 to protest oil pipelines in the Kingston area.

Detectives say the offending undead separated from the larger group and committed several acts of mischief at two downtown banks.

They then continued to city hall, where the back of the building was defaced and a fountain was contaminated with an unknown substance.

Investigators released images and video on Monday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quebec train tragedy

Lac-Mégantic's sister city collects books for town

A library destroyed when a runaway train exploded in Lac-Mégantic, Que., earlier this summer is getting a helping hand from across the U.S. border.

Libraries throughout Maine are collecting donations to help rebuild the one in the small Quebec community.

Forty-seven people died in the explosion and fire that ensued after an unmanned train with 72 tankers of crude oil derailed and crashed into the centre of the eastern Quebec town on July 6.

In nearby Farmington, Maine — Lac-Mégantic's sister city — the public library director launched the effort to help. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Egyptian bakers prepare croissants at a bakery on a Cairo street on Monday. In recent days, violence in the city appears to have abated, prompting authorities to announce that they would shorten a nighttime curfew by two hours.
MARWAN NAAMANI/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Crisis in Egypt also dividing Egyptians living in Canada

Ideological fractures. Even in Toronto, passions are high among those with ties to the turmoil abroad

The same complex ideological fractures colliding in Cairo are creating deep divisions among Egyptians in Canada. Few can pull themselves away from the news, and fewer can speak dispassionately about who they believe is to blame for the tangled mess tearing their home country apart.

"Egyptians here are just as divided as they are in Egypt," said Mohammad Fadel, a law professor at the University of Toronto, who said screaming matches have broken out at local mosques due to the "hysteria" gripping Egyptians.

The deadliest civil unrest in 60 years has so far claimed the lives of 1,000 people, including about 100 soldiers and police.

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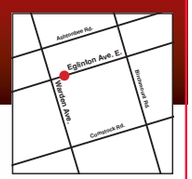

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Manitoba. Premier stands by deputy in controversy over 'white people' remark

Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger rejected opposition demands Monday to reprimand his deputy premier, who referred to the "ignorance of do-good white people" in an email.

Eric Robinson, who is aboriginal, has already apologized for the remark and will remain in cabinet, Selinger said.

"He's staying in cabinet because he's done a good job on the issues that he's been responsible for," Selinger said.

The Opposition Progressive Conservatives have been calling for Robinson's resignation since the comments came to light last week. They are contained in an email Robinson wrote to a government staff member about a burlesque show to raise money for the Osborne House women's shelter.

Robinson wrote that the event demonstrated "the ignorance of do-good white people without giving it a second thought."

Robinson, who is also the minister responsible for aboriginal affairs, repeated his apology Monday. But he stood by his belief that a burlesque show was an inappropriate way to fundraise for a women's shelter and suggested he has a right to express his feelings.

The CEO of Osborne House, Barbara Judt, has filed a complaint with the Manitoba Human Rights Commission. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Quoted

"I think I'm entitled to say that because I experienced racism first-hand."

Manitoba Deputy Premier Eric Robinson

Which came first?

Windsor man plays chicken with police, lays eggs full of cocaine

Police believe a man may have intentionally got himself arrested Friday after he laid a few eggs full of cocaine in a Windsor jail cell.

Police arrested the man for breaching court-ordered conditions while drunk at a Tim Hortons. Officers found two plastic blue eggs in his possession, each containing a powdery "cocaine-like" substance.

The suspect was taken to police headquarters and placed in holding. When officers went to check on him, they discovered four more eggs in the cell's toilet. The eggs also contained the same powder.

Police believe the suspect may have wanted to get arrested, so that he could smuggle the drugs into the county jail. He has been charged with breaching conditions and possession for the purpose of trafficking.

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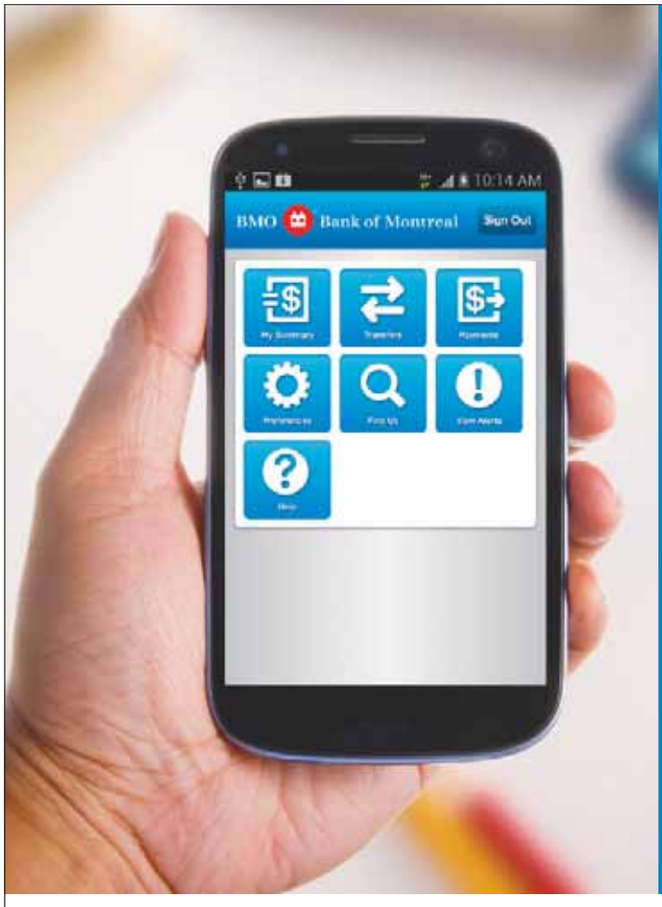

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Home affordability waning, says RBC

Report. Housing market gaining steam again, particularly in Toronto and Vancouver

Those who've been waiting for a lucky break — a downturn in the housing market that could finally bring the cost of owning a house within easier reach — are going to be disappointed by a new RBC Economics report.

"Renewed vigour" in the Toronto and Vancouver resale housing markets just since spring, along with strong housing starts, have reversed some of the cooling that took place in the second half of 2012, RBC says in its latest housing affordability study.

In fact, affordability slipped slightly across most Canadian markets in the second quarter of 2013 over the previous quarter, the report notes.

Local costs

- While the costs of carrying a benchmark bungalow in Toronto remain "moderately worse off" than historic norms, the cost of carrying a two-storey home ate up 63.1 per cent of household costs in the second quarter, up 0.2 percentage points over a year earlier.
- Condominiums remained the most affordable by far, with costs up 0.4 percentage points to 34 per cent year over year.

The deterioration was most pronounced in Vancouver. There, the RBC Housing Affordability Measure — the costs of mortgage payments, utilities and property taxes on a benchmark detached bungalow, as a percentage of household income — hit 82.1 per cent, up 2.2 per cent from the beginning of the year after four quarters of improvement.

In Toronto, affordability slipped 0.5 percentage points to 54.5 per cent for the same benchmark bungalow. Affordability also showed "some greater strain," albeit not excessive, across the rest of Ontario in the second quarter, though "low interest rates have kept affordability within tolerable limits," said RBC senior economist Robert Hogue.

It also helps that annual house-price gains have slowed over the last year or two from double digits and are expected to stay in the single-digit range for some time, notes Hogue.

The price of a detached home in the GTA was up 7.6 per cent in July, year over year, to an average $644,313.

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Philanthropist does it for the kids

Peter Gilgan, founder and CEO of Mattamy Homes, Canada's largest home builder, stands in front of SickKids' new Peter Gilgan Centre for Research and Learning at Bay and Elm streets on Monday. This week the famously low-key philanthropist will see his name installed on the centre, an innovative facility he helped fund through a $40-million donation. MARIANA IONOVA/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Thai police crack down on nitrous oxide balloons

Bangkok. Authorities arrest vendors who are selling laughing gas in backpacker district

Thai authorities are cracking down on vendors in Bangkok's main backpacker district selling cheap doses of balloons filled with nitrous oxide, or laughing gas, to tourists.

Eight vendors have been arrested since police first noticed the trend a few weeks ago along Khao San Road, a pedestrian street lined with bars and cheap hotels, police Lt. Col. Pitiphan Kridakorn said Monday.

Each dose sells for about 130 baht, or $4.30. Pitiphan said the sale of drug-filled balloons started in popular beaches, such as Koh Samui, Pattaya and Koh Pagnan — an island known for "full moon" parties fuelled by drugs and alcohol.

He said police are trying to curb sales of the drug-filled balloons in the capital before it gains wider popularity.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Balloons filled with laughing gas are being sold to tourists in Thailand, and police are trying to halt the trend before it spreads. GETTY IMAGES FILE

Side effects

- Illicit sales of nitrous oxide could cause harmful side effects to users and give the country a negative image, said a Thai police official.
- Those arrested face up to five years in prison and a fine of more than $300 for selling medicine without authorization.

Education. The Donald fires back over Trump U lawsuit

Donald Trump on Monday defended his Trump University as a booming success for student entrepreneurs and blasted New York's Attorney General Eric Schneiderman as a "political hack looking to get publicity."

Schneiderman said Trump is making wild accusations, just like others who commit fraud and get caught. On Saturday he filed a lawsuit alleging the real-estate mogul helped run a phoney university that promised to make students rich but instead steered them into expensive and mostly useless seminars. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Donald Trump THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Market Minute

DOLLAR 95.21¢ (-0.02¢)

TSX 12,760.30 (-2)

OIL $105.92 US (-50¢)

GOLD $1,393.10 US (-$2.70)

Natural gas: $3.50 US (+2¢)
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N.W.T. resource projects may face labour shortage

Yellowknife. As energy ministers from across Canada meet this week, topics include workforce and northern pipeline

A man stands at the edge of Alexandra Falls on the Hay River in the Northwest Territories last week. The idea of a made-in-the-North pipeline is being floated at a meeting of energy ministers in Yellowknife. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Finding skilled labour will be a challenge as major resource projects move ahead in the Northwest Territories, said the territorial minister in charge of energy and mining.

The territory will need around 3,000 new workers, with several new mines set to open over the next eight to 10 years, David Ramsay said Monday in Yellowknife.

"With our remote location (and) the cold weather, it may be difficult for us to attract people to live in the Northwest Territories, but we are going to put our best effort into that," he said.

Some smaller aboriginal communities in the Northwest Territories have a 30 to 40 per cent unemployment rate, so there's a big need for training programs geared toward the jobs that will be coming, he said.

Energy ministers from across Canada are holding their annual meeting in Yellowknife this week. Ramsay said he'll talk to his counterparts about the idea of a made-in-the-North pipeline, which could enable crude to be exported on tankers from the Beaufort Sea or from the Alaskan port of Valdez.

The Northwest Territories has vast oil potential of its own in the emerging Canol shale in the Central Mackenzie Valley.

"We believe that the Northwest Territories is in a perfect location and a perfect time in its history to be right there, front and centre," said Ramsay.

Federal Natural Resources Minister Joe Oliver declined to say whether a northern pipeline would have Ottawa's backing, saying that in principle, his government supports all pipelines that can get resources to export markets, provided they're economically viable and meet regulatory requirements.

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#D2257 - Monica Kahindo
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#1223 - JoanAnn Gravesande
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#2206 - Pietro Carvello
#3332 - Paraskevi Karadimas
#3337 - Camesha Cummings
#3334 - Walter Nisula
#3212 - John Frizzell

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#1319 – B. Whyte
#2043 – A. Walters
#1328 – A. Ogunsakin
#2296 – I. Regis,
#2052 – A. Bromfield
#2273 – K. Yirenkyi
#2200 – J. Di Luca
#1288 – R. Chipumgahelo
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WHEN WE GO TOO FAR WITH FOOD

SHE SAYS

Jessica Napier
metronews.ca

Our relationship to food is beyond sustenance. We photograph it, tweet about it and obsess over what it looks like and where it comes from.

In North America, we are living in an era of food-as-spectacle; celebrity chefs have been elevated from kitchens to red carpets while the rest of us fanatically share our own food porn across various social media sites. The Food Network airs Olympiad-like programming 24 hours a day to determine who can decorate, create and consume various different foods in the fastest possible time.

Our collective obsession with good cuisine is rivaled only by our masochistic obsession with conquering outrageously bad food. From Kentucky Fried Chicken's Double Down to Taco Bell's new Breakfast Waffle Taco, it seems there is just no limit when it comes to sandwiching calorie-heavy foods around each other and attempting to digest the result. We've pushed the boundaries of acceptable food combinations beyond the limits of good taste (literally) and are now just making ourselves sick in the name of extreme consumption.

One such culinary hybrid got the best of intrepid eaters in Toronto last week when the Canadian National Exhibition's must-try food of the season sent 150 people heaving over their toilet bowls with serious gastrointestinal issues. The culprit was a disgusting-sounding Cronut Burger consisting of a beef patty and processed cheese sandwiched between two sugary cronuts, a fusion croissant-doughnut popularized by Dominique Ansel Bakery in New York City. Even looking at a photograph of the monstrous carnival snack is enough to give anyone food poisoning by proxy.

And if the Cronut Burger is the ultimate example of low-brow dietary disaster, then Ray & Stark Bar's elitist new water menu lives on the other end of the spectrum when it comes to conspicuous culinary trends.

The Los Angeles-based restaurant recently introduced a 45-page leather-bound water menu, which boasts over 20 varieties from around the world to try by the bottle or as a tasting flight. That's right, dinner patrons can fork over $12 to sample a selection of bottled waters served in three-ounce tasting glasses. There's even a water expert on hand in case you need some guidance in deciding what brand of H2O pairs best with your pretentiousness.

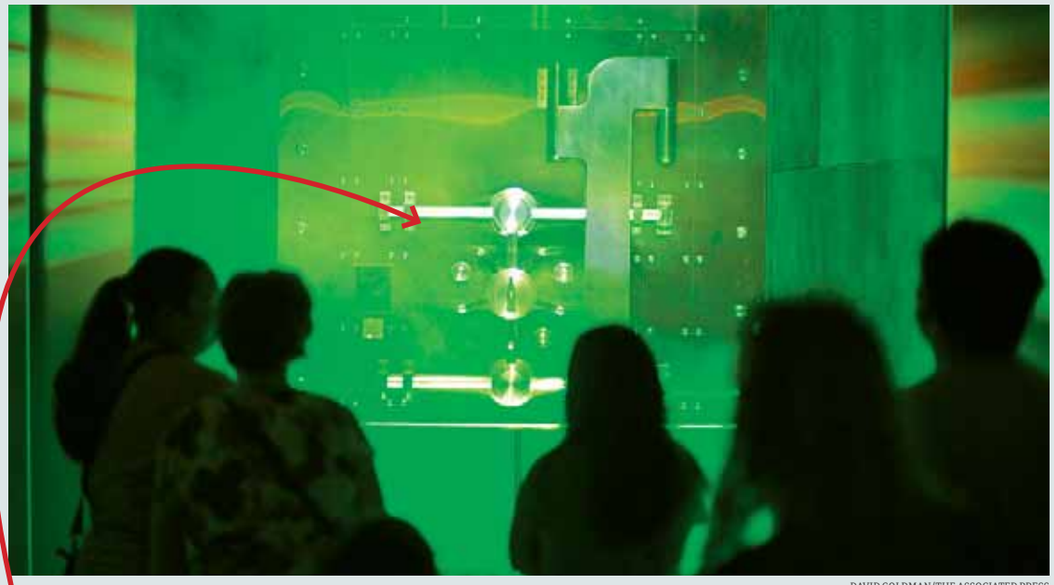
Enough is enough everyone; we've taken foodie culture too far. I do not want to live in a world where people pay more than the hourly minimum wage for nine ounces of water or where experimental eaters routinely gorge themselves on highly processed gastronomic abominations.

All of this excess is making me sick to my stomach.

Follow Jessica Napier on Twitter @MetroSheSays

ZOOM

You think Coke's formula is unchanged?



DAVID GOLDMAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Major brands play up false notion of sacred recipes

Coca-Cola keeps the recipe for its 127-year-old soda inside an imposing steel vault that's bathed in security lights. Several cameras monitor the area to make sure the fizzy formula stays a secret.

"It's a little bit for show," concedes a guard at the World of Coca-Cola museum in downtown Atlanta, where the vault is revealed at the end of an exhibit in a puff of smoke.

The ability to push a quaint narrative about a product's origins and fuel a sense of nostalgia can help drive billions of dollars in sales. It's why companies such as Coca-Cola and Twinkies' owner Hostess play up the notion that their recipes are unchanging documents that need to be closely guarded.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In the 1980s...

- Coca-Cola and PepsiCo switched from sugar to high-fructose corn syrup, a cheaper sweetener. The companies last year also said they'd change the way they make the caramel colouring to avoid having to put a cancer warning label on their drinks in California, where law requires such labels for foods containing carcinogens.

Twinkie, twinkie little switch

This summer, Twinkies made a comeback. At the time, the new owners promised they would taste just like before.

But a box of Twinkies now has a shelf-life of 45 days, almost three weeks longer than the 26 days from a year ago. That suggests the ingredients have been tinkered with, to say the least.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Clickbait

ANDREW FIFIELD
andrew.fifield@metronews.ca

Among the many reasons to love living in the modern age is the infinite entertainment, wisdom and learning available in podcast form on the iTunes store. If you're the type to leave your cellphone on the bathroom counter as a shower radio, these three subscriptions are among the most reliable brain food you'll find to feed that insatiable appetite.

JOSE CSILVA/FLICKR

The Body Sphere:

An unfailingly fascinating Australian radio show that examines our bodies and the way we use and abuse them. Recent episodes include a surgeon's perspective on a liver transplant and testing the Paleo diet theory that modern life is wreaking havoc on our primitive systems.

Love + Radio:

Two ways to dip your toes into an unfamiliar topic are to have an expert teach you about it or get a first-hand account from somebody who lived through it. L+R takes the latter approach by using deep one-on-one interviews with people who have endured or enjoyed odd life experiences you have to hear to believe.

Pop Up Ideas:

Tim Harford smoothly hosts this BBC program that delivers bite-sized lessons on how economics, philosophy and other social sciences shape the world we live and work in.

Twitter

@metropicks asked: Zurich will open drive-in sex boxes for safer prostitution. What would be in a Canadian 'sex box'?

@Medros: maple flavored condoms? prostitutes offering poutine on the side? lol I have no idea

@xRapunzalx: bacon!!

@Canucklehead_ca: Bacon, cold beer, two orders of poutine, a TV tuned to HNIC, government provided Viagra & an apology note.

@JacksActII: Info about treating sex trade workers with respect, the struggle for dignity, safety (for all), mutual boundaries

@lester04: maple syrup lube, a complimentary toque, and poutine to send you on your way afterwards.

@Shmingers: Wool socks, doughnuts, and an oar.

@_J_T_V_: a North of 60 DVD box set

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All hail the Queen

Daytime TV.
Queen Latifah takes grassroots approach to her new talk show

Can Queen Latifah be the next Oprah? Find out when her talk show debuts this fall. CONTRIBUTED

She's reviewed the research, and heard from the focus groups, but Queen Latifah is relying on a different source to help discern what may — or may not — get fickle viewers to tune into her show this fall.

She's been talking to her aunts, her cousins as well as people on the street, "people who don't have that much money in their pockets at all," Latifah says, to find out what they are interested in.

"I am a TV watcher; I come from a TV watching family," says the newest celebrity to throw her name-recognition into the daytime talk show ring.

"I love to be entertained, so I sit and watch a lot of the talk shows. I watch Ellen. I watch Maury. I watch Fallon. I watch TV and I want to create things that I want. I consider myself a viewer."

In the rush to fill the Oprah-void over the last couple of years, a number of shows were programmed into the daytime schedules only to find themselves viewer-anaemic and wasting away on the schedule. It was a reality Latifah said she wanted to avoid.

"You kind of knew that was going to happen, that there was going to be a big rush into the field, and some thrived and survived and some did not," said the Oscar-nominee who had a short-lived talk show that premiered in 1999.

"Audiences got to decide what they wanted."

Audiences, hopes the Queen, will decide on her this time.

When talking about her dream guest, Latifah couldn't come up with just one name.

"I don't think there is a dream guest," she said. "I think the dream guest is who the audience wants to see. It's not just the A-lister or the president — any of those amazing people.

"But for me, the dream guests … are the regular people doing amazing and extraordinary things who you don't know but make for great television.

"The strength of the team that we have … is to be able to think on our feet and be able to do things as they happen in real life," she added. "I just want to give them a place where they can chill, open up and be real."

To fulfil her goal, Latifah said she wants to avoid the pitfalls of a highly structured show. The Grammy winner doesn't want to be mired down by a set format.

"My whole career has been based on not necessarily doing what everybody else was doing, and doing what I felt. I want to keep it open," said Latifah. "I will be keeping in touch with my audience. We will catch up."

And perhaps even sing. While Ellen dances, Latifah may just corner daytime TV's musical quotient. "Music is part of my life. Obviously I wouldn't be where I am today without music, so music will be of great importance to the show."

METRO

Also returning

Arsenio Hall — get ready to 'woot' again

Arsenio Hall

Arsenio Hall, whose first talk show aired from 1989 to 1994, returns weeknights on Omni starting Monday, Sept. 9. METRO

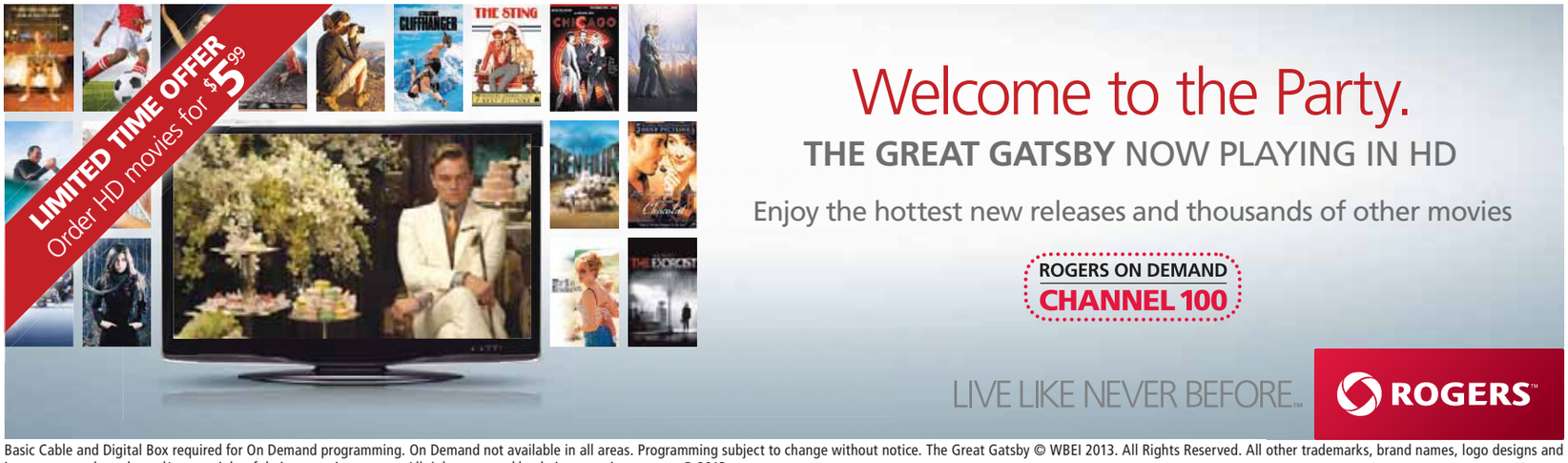
Ladies first

The Queen Latifah Show premieres Sept. 16 on Global.

- **Competition.** Queen Latifah's biggest competition to this season's talk-show throne may be a former Housewives star. Bethenny Frankel, purveyor of Skinnygirl products and a former cast member of The Real Housewives of New York City, will premiere her show, Bethenny, on CTV starting Monday, Sept. 9. It is executive produced by talk-show maven Ellen DeGeneres.

Frankel

- **The Social.** Also entering the daytime arena is CTV's original production The Social, featuring Melissa Grelo, Lainey Lui, Cynthia Loyst and Traci Melcher. As its name suggests, the show will use social media and text messaging to probe viewers for opinions on the latest in news and popular culture while the ladies have their own round-table discussion à la The View. It premieres Monday, Sept. 2. METRO



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Succulent, strange and only steps away

Home is where the yum is. Bizarre Foods America host talks feeding an appetite for foreign cuisine in your own backyard

EVA KIS
Metro World News in NYC

Andrew Zimmern, host of Bizarre Foods America, encourages viewers to fork ahead without fear. CONTRIBUTED

It takes more than a unique dish to pique Andrew Zimmern's interest. The Bizarre Foods America host finds himself roaming between California and New York (with a detour to Canada) to tempt his taste buds.

Why, having travelled all over the world, eating everything from "bleeding rocks" in Chile to eggplant custard in Greece, is he keeping it local?

"To me, it's all about great stories; great stories that we were overlooking," explains Zimmern, whose show premieres Wednesday on DTOUR.

"The beauty of America is that it's a country of immigrants. I think there are more stories here from the fringe and foods from other cultures than anywhere else in the world," he says.

"I don't know whether I eat to travel or travel to eat, but to me they're not two strands of spaghetti in a dish; they are the same noodle."

Now that we're all hungry, where does Zimmern recommend you call ahead before packing your bags and hitting the road?

Providence, R.I.: "There are chefs who are doggedly committed to the ingredients coming out of the farms and the oceans. It's a brilliant city to be eating through right now."
One to try: Farmstead's award-winning burger, with polenta fries (farmsteadinc.com).

Houston: "There is an internationalist, global food influence going on."
One to try: Korean goat dumplings at Underbelly (underbellyhouston.com).

Toronto: "I always love the place I just came from. Right now, I am overwhelmed by a place called King's Noodle, an incredible Chinese restaurant."
One to try: Get there and ask for anything with pork.

Portland, Ore.: "I do think the DIY food movement in Portland is extraordinary."
One to try: Xocolatl de David's foie gras-infused chocolate (xocolatldedavid.com).

How to choose a bizarre food

Getting in is only the beginning. Wherever you find yourself at a table in the world, what's the golden rule of choosing the right thing?

- "If I go to a sushi bar, I don't order the yakitori (grilled chicken). I go to eat the food that's expert in those places," Zimmern says.
- Look for restaurants that change their menus with the season, with ingredients harvested at their peak freshness. Or, you can always put your decision in the hands of the people who know the menu best.
- "I like to talk to the people in the restaurants: 'What's the restaurant loving to cook right now?'"

Chopped Canada

"I am just trying to do my own thing. I think it's important when you are hosting to bring yourself to the table, because you don't want to emulate anyone else."

Chopped Canada's Dean McDermott on what sets his hosting skills apart from the host of the U.S. version of the show, Ted Allen. The culinary reality show airs this winter on Food Network Canada.

King & Maxwell

Rebecca Romijn CONTRIBUTED

Romijn's new drama is 'loud'

Rebecca Romijn has never been a fan of procedural dramas. But when she read a script for King & Maxwell, scrolling through the words on her iPhone while at a gymnastics class two days before the audition, its cast of characters drew her into the plot. "This is character driven. We're asking you to care more about the characters working on the case than the case itself," Romijn said. "It's louder than your typical procedural." In King & Maxwell, set to premiere on Showcase tonight at 10 p.m., Romijn plays tough former Secret Service agent-turned private eye Michelle Maxwell. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

The VMAs: Wherefore art thou Biebs?

PAT HEALY
Metro World News

Now that I've had a full day to let the clusterf— that was this year's VMAs sink in (and to recover from the 24-hour hangover brought on by the magnum bottle of wine required to get through the thing), I have some questions. So many questions (not the least of which is why they still carry on with this charade at all — next year let's just have a Best Knocked Up Teen Baby Bump Awards and call it a day).

And here's the first question: Where was Justin Bieber?! I can't be the only one who thought his dopey, overly-coiffed absence was conspicuous. You guys, I DO NOT THINK HE WAS INVITED. I think that Justin Bieber's 2013 Video Music Awards invitation was lost in the mail.

My God, if this isn't the swiftest fall from grace since Lindsay Lohan nose-dived her career into a big pile of cocaine and regret, I don't know what is.

DVD reviews

The Great Gatsby

Director. Baz Luhrmann

Stars. Leonardo DiCaprio, Carey Mulligan, Tobey Maguire

●●●○○

Aussie director/showman Baz Luhrmann is in his element whenever the lens turns towards the opulence of F. Scott Fitzgerald's Jazz Age prose: jewelry by Tiffany, clothes by Prada, Miu Miu and Brooks Brothers, cars by Rolls-Royce and Duesenberg, anachronistic hip-hop curated by Jay-Z. What's missing is genuine drama. Leonardo DiCaprio is the right man to play Gatsby, possessing the same earnest desire to please and determination to succeed as Fitzgerald's 1920s striver. It's a marvel to behold him — lit him from behind with exploding fireworks in one of many great party moments — and to see how much he's matured since the youthful frolics of Romeo + Juliet, his 1996 breakthrough role and first film with Luhrmann. We're also reminded of what this movie could have been, had Luhrmann taken a few risks and not let Fitzgerald to do all the dramatic thinking. Carey Mulligan drags as Daisy and Tobey Maguire numbs as Nick.

Still Mine

Director. Michael McGowan

Stars. James Cromwell, Ronan Rees

●●●●○

Toronto writer/director Michael McGowan (One Week, St. Ralph) attentively observes a love tested by infirmity and bureaucracy, becoming all the stronger for it. Pairing James Cromwell and Geneviève Bujold in memorable roles, this small marvel of a film is based on a true story of a Maritimes senior who breaks zoning rules to build a dream home on his own land for his ailing wife. He's not going to let red tape stop him from doing the right thing. Still Mine is essentially a two-hander, gorgeously filmed in New Brunswick (and also Northern Ontario). **PETER HOWELL**

Selena's heart beats for baby faces no longer

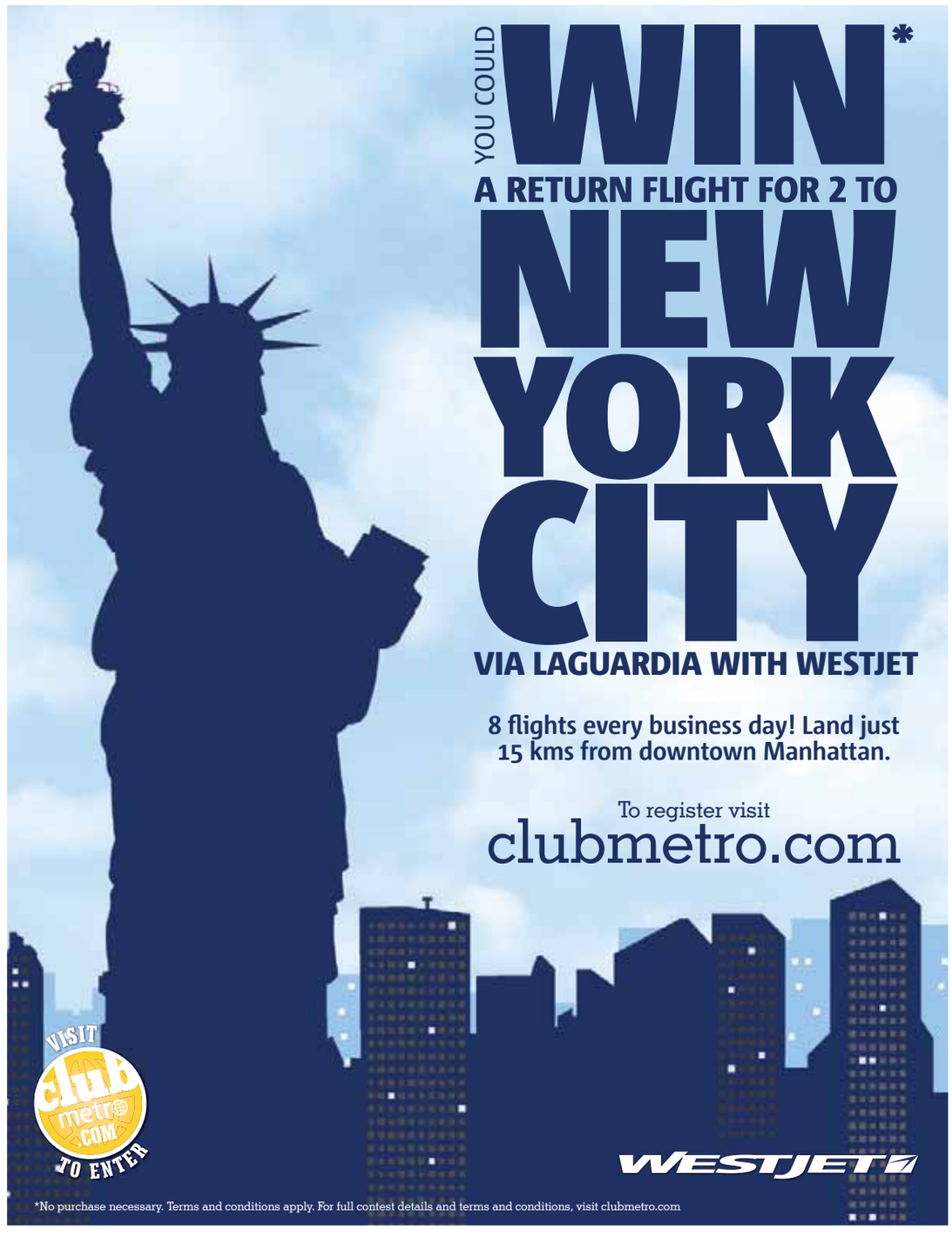
Bad news for Justin Bieber: Selena Gomez's taste in men is maturing. The 21-year-old singer and actress, who has been striving for a mature, grown-up image, tells Us Weekly that her celebrity crush is following suit. "Well, I once said Logan Lerman, but now it's George Clooney," she says. That can't bode well for her on-again, off-again boyfriend, the more Lerman-like Bieber.

Selena Gomez. ALL PHOTOS GETTY

The truth remains, 'N Sync is gone

Fans of 'N Sync who thought the band's reunion at the MTV Video Music Awards might just be the beginning, don't get your hopes up. It was a one-night-only kind of reunion, Joey Fatone's dad tells Radar Online. "People are hyping this as to mean like next month they'll go on tour, but there's been no talk of it," Joseph Fatone Sr. says "Yes there are still fanatical fans who hope for one day that 'N Sync will get back together, but the truth is that they are all doing their own thing now."

'N Sync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Sustain seasonal mindsets

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Snowball your credit card debts: Prioritize high interest rates

"People overspend on their credit card abroad because it doesn't feel like real money. Then their statement comes in, and it's a shock," says Jasmine Birtles, founder of Money Magpie. List your debts according to how expensive the interest is. "It doesn't matter how much you owe, pay the minimum back on all of them, except the one with the most expensive interest. Make that one your priority, paying back as much as you can each month," she says.

Pay yourself a salary

"If you can afford to go for a drink, then you've got the money to save," Birtles tells Metro.

For extra cash, she recommends you set up a standing order at the beginning of each month (you'll have spent it all at the end) from your current account into a savings account.

"Pretend you're paying yourself. Even if it's just $50 a month, that's $600 a year," she notes.

Sex is passive: Learn to let go of lust

"Working is active and sex is passive in that it's something that happens to you. When you're aroused, you don't want to do anything especially productive," sex therapist Stephen Snyder tells Metro.

"You can still have great sex in the fall, but there's something special about summer that can't always be recaptured. So just enjoy the fact that you've been refreshed and restored by the experience," he suggests.

Connection, not penetration, is the key to great sex

According to Snyder, people feel most alive when they're on holiday, and part of the grief of coming home is that you have to give up that feeling.

To cultivate arousal (when you don't have the time or energy for sex) try "simmering," a technique that helps keep erotic feelings alive and preserves a couple's sexual bond.

"To simmer, spend two minutes staring into each other's eyes and breathing in unison. There should be no orgasms, no stroking and no heavy breathing — just stillness," he explains.

Let your mind settle into your body

"If you're feeling anxious, try and bring your awareness back to your physical senses," says Puddicombe, co-founder of Headspace, an online resource for meditation techniques. "Observe your posture, notice any tensions or sensations in the body, any smells or sounds, and sensations of heat or cold. Mindfulness isn't about emptying the mind, or suppressing uncomfortable emotions, but learning to witness these thoughts and feelings, free from distraction and judgement. Acknowledge them and they'll gradually begin to unwind," he explains.

Spend 1 per cent of your day meditating

"There are 1,440 minutes in one day. Take 10 to meditate and you'll feel less stressed, less tired, and less anxious," says Andy Puddicombe.

"A healthy mind is the lens to a healthy life."

Meditation only works if you actually keep to it, so try and establish a regular practice that fits into your daily routine.

Move more: Do squats before lunch

"Our bodies are designed to move, so move every day. It doesn't have to be strenuous," says Duigan, who trains model Rosie Huntington-Whiteley and is the co-founder of Bodyism clinic.

Go for a walk.

"Don't just think about exercising as a way to look better. Embrace it as part of your life."

Divvy up your meals and lay off the alcohol

James Duigan, a fitness trainer, recommends eating five healthy meals a day, two of which should be smaller snacks.

"Snacking ensures you don't overeat and will also help speed up your metabolism. Swap sugary treats and low-fat foods (often packed with hidden sugar), for things like raw nuts, turkey slices, berries, vegetables or pea protein shakes (try Bodyism's Protein Excellence)," he says.

And stay away from alcohol. "It will make you feel sluggish, bloated, and reduce your body's ability to burn fat," he warns.

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Back to school. Less sugar, and they'll be much healthier children

Healthy lunches breed healthy minds. ISTOCK PHOTOS

Back-to-school season is just about here, and if you're packing your kiddo's lunch box this year, we've got ideas for how to make it healthier, especially since September is National Childhood Obesity month. Read on for tips from Dr. Natalie Digate Muth, a community pediatrician and senior health strategist with the American Council on Exercise.

Aim for balance
Try to include something from each of the major food groups: a whole grain, vegetable, fruit, protein and a source of calcium, to show your child what a balanced meal includes.

Create healthy selections
One of the best ways that parents can help their children develop healthy eating habits is to repeatedly expose them to a wide variety of foods.

Teach portion control
Use plastic baggies, attempt to measure out what a standard portion actually is and try to pick up some inherently portion-controlled items for the lunch box, like applesauce and string cheese, to help instil a sense of what appropriately sized portions are.

METRO

Download

Get some healthy online help

There's a new app that teaches you how to make healthier tweaks to the recipes you already have. CalCutter, a free mobile app made available on iPhone and Android, helps calculate the calorie counts of meals and gives advice on how to cut them. METRO

Fried chicken
How to reduce calories:
• Consider substituting egg whites for whole eggs.
• Consider reducing amount of Bread Crumbs, dry.
• Consider pan frying or sauteing instead of deep frying.
• Consider substituting Chicken breast, no
540
410

Best Health

Decoding food labels

BEST HEALTH MINUTE
Bonnie Munday
Editor-in-chief
Best Health Magazine

In the September issue of Best Health, regular columnist Sue Mah, a registered dietitian, deciphers the nutrition claims on products. Here are some examples:

Labels that say "fat-free"
This means the food contains less than 0.5 grams of fat per serving. But fat-free doesn't always mean nutritious: some foods that are fat-free are made of unhealthy ingredients. Also, we do need some healthy fats in our diet because they help us absorb essential vitamins and minerals we get from our food.

Labels that say "no sugar added"
This means the food or drink contains no added sugars (e.g., sugar, molasses, corn syrup, etc.). But the claim does not account for the natural sugars in some foods.

Read those labels closely. ISTOCK PHOTOS

Labels that say "cholesterol-free"
This means the food contains less than 2 mg of cholesterol per serving. However, since cholesterol is found only in animal-based foods, if a vegetable oil bottle or frozen fries package says "cholesterol-free," they never would have had cholesterol in the first place.

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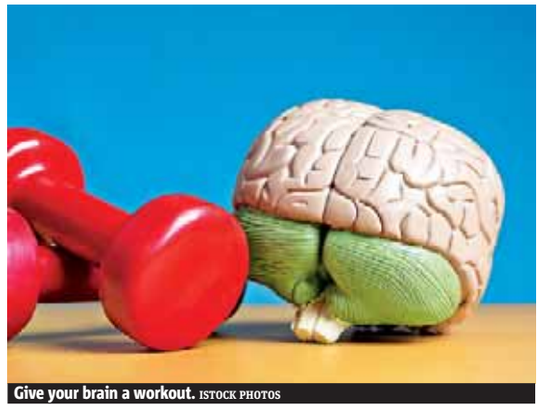
Train your brain or watch it drain away

Working out the grey matter. Growth of memory fitness industry prompts creation of new online checkup to help place brain performance


Give your brain a workout. ISTOCK PHOTOS

When Marcel Wieder's aunt was diagnosed with early onset dementia several years ago, the Toronto resident started to worry about his own brain health. "It hit close to home," said the 52-year-old public affairs consultant.

Cogniciti, a Toronto-based joint venture between Baycrest Health Sciences and the MaRS Discovery District, is hoping to answer that question with a new online memory assessment, slated to launch this fall.

The short, computer-based "brain checkup" promises to tell users whether their memory is normal for their age or whether a doctor's visit is in order.

It also allows users to track their memory performance over time, so they can spot any unusual declines.

Cogniciti is seeking to ride the popularity of the "brain fitness" wave, a burgeoning new industry that one market research company estimates will be worth $4 billion to $8 billion globally by 2020.

The aging population and recent developments in neuroscience have made brain health a hot topic lately, especially as the "silver tsunami" of baby boomers heads toward retirement.

Three signs

Here are three things to watch for that could indicate someone is developing Alzheimer's

- **Sign 1.** Anyone can occasionally misplace their keys, but someone with Alzheimer's may leave things in inappropriate places, such as putting their wallet in the fridge.
- **Sign 2.** Becoming lost and disoriented
- **Sign 3.** Difficulty performing familiar tasks

Alvaro Fernandez, chief executive of California-based SharpBrains, said the brain fitness industry — which is comprised mostly of computer-based games that promise to improve your mental abilities — is already worth over $1 billion. Fernandez foresees a world where people will enlist the help of "brain fitness trainers" to sharpen their minds and athletes will be able to use tablets and smartphones to check whether they've suffered a concussion.

"The field is going to grow to be as mainstream as physical fitness is now," Fernandez said.

The Alzheimer Society of Canada estimated that a staggering 1.4 million Canadians will have Alzheimer's disease and other dementias by 2031.

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Salmon cakes elevate canned fish to level fancy

Wasabi-Spiked Salmon Cakes with Pickled Cucumber

This recipe serves six. MATTHEW MEAD/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

1. In a small bowl, toss together the cucumber, ginger, vinegar, salt and sugar. Let stand for 10 minutes while you prepare the remaining ingredients.

2. In a large nonstick skillet over medium, heat 1 tablespoon of the oil. Add the onion and cook until golden, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a medium bowl. Reserve the skillet.

3. Add the salmon to the onion along with the mayonnaise, wasabi, crushed crackers and 1/4 cup of the liquid from the marinated cucumbers. Form the mixture into 6 burgers.

4. Return the skillet to medium-high heat. Add 1 1/2 tablespoons of the remaining oil. Add the salmon burgers to the skillet. Cook until golden, about 3 minutes. Add the remaining 1 1/2 tablespoons of oil, turn the cakes over and cook until golden on the second side, about another 3 minutes.

5. Transfer to 6 plates and top each salmon cake with a mound of the pickled cucumber.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/SARA MOULTON, AUTHOR OF SARA MOULTON'S EVERYDAY FAMILY DINNERS.

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups thinly sliced seedless cucumber
- 1 tsp grated fresh ginger
- 2 tsp rice vinegar
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp sugar
- 4 tbsp vegetable or canola oil, divided
- 1 cup finely chopped yellow onion
- Two 6-oz cans boneless, skinless salmon
- 1/4 cup low-fat mayonnaise
- 2 to 3 tsp prepared wasabi
- 1 cup crushed sesame flavoured thin rice crackers (about 32)

Health Solutions

Out with waste

NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert
DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

According to a recent study commissioned by KitchenAid (which has a new Preserva fridge to solve the problem simply), Canadians waste $2.5 billion each year in rotten produce. Here are the top five abused vegetables and ways to reuse them:

Lettuce
Don't open the box of greens until you can use them. The nitrogen within is modified to prevent spoilage. Add a fresh paper towel to the box each time you use to absorb water.

Bananas
Blend with protein powder and peanut butter and freeze as popsicles when they are over-ripe.

Tomatoes
Lay wilty ones on a cookie sheet and roast at 275 F with olive oil for a couple hours. Use in pasta or as a bread topping.

Grapes
Freeze for use in cocktails or consume frozen on ice cream.

Celery
Freeze and save with chicken bones and onion ends then dump into a slow cooker when you have a bagful to make stock.

It's all about controlling the ethylene gas emitted as well as the moisture from fruits and veg. Think beyond the first pretty produce into a second life. Don't waste, people. Sheesh. THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST AND PRIVATE NUTRITIONIST IN TORONTO. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM

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Game developers: To love them isn't always to know them

Players gonna play. Indie studio Capybara Games has found its niche market

TAKARA SMALL
Metro News in Toronto
@takarasmall

Who: Capybara Games

What: An independent video game studio based in Toronto

Where: 174 Spadina Ave., Toronto

Why: "Capybara is a huge guinea pig and the studio is a guinea pig for people who want to build and create games," says Nathan Vella, 34, co-founder and president of Capybara Games

Nathan Vella, co-founder and president of Capybara Games, can proudly say that his company has grown to 22 employees and produced mobile games for heavyweight franchises such as Happy Feet and Scarface. PROVIDED

E-laborate

• Go to metronews.ca/voices/mom-and-pop-shops to find out more about this Canadian gaming studio.

You may not have heard of video game studio Capybara Games, known fondly as Capy by fans, but you've most likely heard of their games.

The award-winning Canadian outfit is one of a handful of indie studios leading a gaming expansion north of the 49th parallel.

Nathan Vella, 34, co-founder and president of the company started the business with four friends in 2003 after becoming disillusioned with his career as a TV editor.

"I went to Ryerson for film and after I graduated started working as an editor for a living," he says. " When we left school we thought we would be doing something cooler … more creative. ... We just didn't have a burning desire to work in film anymore and wanted something different."

The company is named after the Capybara, a South American rodent that, at least to my eyes, resembles a bigger, fatter version of a guinea pig. "Capybara is a huge guinea pig and the studio is like a guinea pig for people who want to build and create new games."

In their early years, which Vella refers to as "the dark times" the company had only 12 employees and spent every waking hour (when not at their day jobs) working on growing the business and honing their developer skills.

"There wasn't a lot of people we could ask for help when we started this," Vella says. "We read a lot of books, and fudged our way through pretty much everything."

"There were only two studios in the city at the time and we thought, 'Let's try making our own studio and if it works, great, and if it doesn't, cool.'"

Eventually the startup found their niche market, quit their jobs and expanded by cracking into the lucrative U.S. gaming market.

Over the last decade, they've created a host of successful games ranging from Disney's Cars (2005) to Critter Crunch (2009) and their widely released Superbrothers: Sword & Sworcery EP (2011). The latter won the indie studio a host of professional awards and what can only be deemed as gaming credentials amongst other gamers.

Despite the success, Vella is most proud of how he and his co-founders managed to create a new career for themselves and suggests others do the same and create their own opportunities.

"We are a studio full of people that never made games before (we started the business) but proved that with teamwork and really good (work ethic) you can turn what seemed like a stupid idea into a team and great company."

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Before that bell rings, let's discuss a few things

Practising the walk to school or shopping for new clothes and school supplies can help kids become more comfortable with what is to come.

DARRYL DYCK / THE CANADIAN PRESS

Let's talk about stress, baby! Maintaining an open dialogue with your young student about their back-to-school concerns will ease a tough transition

Back-to-school time can be back-to-stress time for kids of all ages. But experts say there are ways to help them cope with the anxiety that can be triggered by the return to the structured environment of the classroom.

Preparing kids for what is coming up, getting them back into a regular sleep routine, reconnecting them with school friends they may not have seen over the summer — these and other techniques will help with the readjustment, according to these experts.

But the most important approach may be just to talk with and listen to children, adolescents and teens about what worries them when they think about the resumption of classes, says David Wolfe, a psychologist and senior scientist at Toronto's Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

"And to say, 'I understand it's tough to go back to school. The more you talk about it, the more you tell me what's going on, the more I can at least listen and help you if I think I can,'" says Wolfe, who works with children and teens.

It's entirely normal to feel a degree of stress associated with the start of school, experts say.

Young children who are going to school for the first time can be fearful about facing the unknown and worried about being separated during the day from a parent or a trusted caregiver.

Older children who've already been in school may dread the return to a regimented world where they have to buckle down to work. "There's nothing abnormal about going from a low responsibility situation in the summer to a higher one and feeling anxious about it," Wolfe says.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

From scary to sanctuary. Love where you learn, and you'll turn out fine

He has retired after three decades in the classroom, but concerns for current and future generations of students remain front of mind for Michael Reist — particularly youngsters who may feel ill at ease within the school environment.

"School should be a happy place that kids like to go to. That's my dream. And I saw too many kids that hated it and for whom it was even damaging, and an incredible loss of human potential in kids who had so much to offer," recalled the longtime teacher who lives in Caledon East, Ont.

"But because of the way the school system works, they were made to feel stupid. They were made to feel excluded. Their self-esteem was damaged. And I want to talk about that. I want to open up a conversation and I want to get parents involved."

In his new book, What Every Parent Should Know About School (Dundurn), Reist looks at the physical, emotional and social environments within schools and the students and educators who comprise the system.

While his book is geared toward parents, Reist also encourages discussion among teachers and administrators to examine strengths and weaknesses within the current system. The father of four also stressed the need to listen to kids and to observe how they demonstrate their feelings about school in words and actions — all an effort to create more effective strategies to help them thrive.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Males on the move

Reist has spoken frequently to parent groups and education conferences across Canada with workshops centred on gender differences and learning.

- In the book, he writes that one reason boys fall behind in school is because they favour spatial activities that are enticing to the male brain — a contrast from the largely logical, linear and verbal functioning of the school environment which is generally more comfortable for the female brain. While literacy in boys should be encouraged, "we must also find ways of tapping into their natural love of movement."

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Study puts a price on friendship

Big Brothers Big Sisters. Can you put a price tag on the big-little relationship?

JESSICA SMITH
Metro in Toronto

How much is friendship worth? Advice over lunch, encouragement at a bowling alley, shared laughs at a mall?

About $315,000 in income over a lifetime, $32,154 in additional tax revenue for government coffers, and $49,819 in increased spending added to the economy, according to Big Brothers Big Sisters Toronto.

The charity, which matches youth known as "littles" with mentors known as "bigs," has always seen immeasurable results from the friends, but set out to prove its investments are worthwhile, financially.

"More and more, people who are donating to charities don't just want to write a cheque; they want to say, 'How is my money being spent and what is the result," said Sandra Downey, director of business development and communications of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Toronto.

So, Big Brothers Big Sisters Toronto recruited the consulting firm The Boston Group to help them put a price tag on the big-little relationship.

The Boston Group found 250 former "littles," now aged 25 to 65, from the organization's alumni records and a further 250 from an Ipsos Reid panel, said study author James Tucker. Another 1,000 people from similar family and economic backgrounds — generally single parent and low-income — served as a comparison group.

The people who'd had the influence of a big brother or sister growing up, on average, earned more and gave more to charity. They were more likely to report they worked in a senior leadership role at work, pursued a healthy lifestyle, are generally happy, are financially literate, make good life choices and have a strong network of family and friends.

"What I felt was really compelling about this was you can finally put a hard value around mentorship and filling a hole in a young person's life," Tucker said.

"Full (disclosure): I was a little brother," he added. "It's no surprise to me that those people felt more confident, generally happier; they had a stronger support network. Therefore, they had much higher earnings than their peer group."

For Ada, 17, her three-year friendship with her mentor Tracy has had a big impact on her life. The two are heading to Montreal soon to check out McGill University, which Ada will be able to afford to attend because she earned a scholarship specifically for little brothers and sisters, which Tracy encouraged her to apply for.

"I had no means to fill out that application. I didn't even know what a scholarship was. I didn't know how much university was," said Ada. "Without her motivation and support I never would have done it."

Ada said her mom struggles with mental illness, which has made her do and say things that would hurt Ada's self-esteem, but Tracy's encouragement has helped her build it back up. "Look at me now. I'm a scholar. I'm going to be going to university, the first in my family to go to university and create a better life for my mother and I."

Former 'littles' are experiencing the benefits of spending time with 'bigs' later in life. ISTOCK IMAGES

Former littles/control group

- **Employed full time.** 68 per cent / 58 per cent
- **Average full-time salaries.** $59,600 / $52,700
- **Volunteer for community service.** 66 per cent / 43 per cent
- **Hours of community service per year.** 95 / 73
- **Donate to charity.** 77 per cent / 67 per cent
- **Average annual charitable donations.** $395 / $329
- **Pursuing a healthy lifestyle.** 80 per cent / 72 per cent
- **Financially literate.** 81 per cent / 70 per cent
- **A senior leader in their workplace.** 47 per cent / 32 per cent
- **Consider themselves a happy person.** 42 per cent / 26 per cent
- **Strongly agree that they make good life choices.** 52 per cent / 39 per cent
- **Strongly agree that they have a strong network of family and friends.** 42 per cent / 28 per cent

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As the business world continues to change and grow, so must the managers and employees.

Stay on top of the pack with training in the executive management program at McMaster University DeGroote School of Business.

"Today's leaders must be continually learning, adding new skills and updating and improving what they already know," says Alex Lowy, executive management program instructor at DeGroote School of Business, McMaster University, and director, Transcend Strategy Group.

"Staying current is not an option in the 24-7 Internet worked business world most organizations operate in."

The executive management program is designed for middle- to senior-level managers looking to further advance their management skill set, and has been developed by leading MBA faculty and industry leaders to provide a high-level overview of topics that are touched on in the MBA program.

The program topics include finance, strategic planning, leadership, corporate branding, performance management and marketing.

Lowy says the program provides a much needed tune-up in topics ranging from fundamentals like finance and leadership to cutting-edge practices in social media and strategy.

"Managers who find themselves too busy to learn risk slipping into unproductive patterns, falling behind their colleagues, and, ultimately, holding their enterprises back," Lowy says. "Organizations need their leaders to keep learning, to bring new knowledge, methods, perspectives and positive energy to work.

"These are the leaders who will make a difference, and these same leaders are the ones most likely to be promoted to more senior and important positions."

Students can take all seven courses and be current across the board, or they can pick the areas of greatest need and relevance.

The one-day-per-seminar design makes the learning efficient and affordable.

Course leaders are recognized experts in their field, bringing up-to-date methods and advice from their research and work with clients.

For more about the executive management program, visit degroote.mcmaster.ca.

LEARNING ON THE GO

SERGEY SKLEZNEV/COLOURBOX

New trends in continuing education headlined the sixth annual International Conference of Hybrid Learning at the University of Toronto school of continuing studies recently.

Hybrid learning has been called a "new frontier in education," offering a mix of online or e-learning and resources, with traditional face-to-face learning and physical resources.

Marilynn Booth, dean of the school of continuing studies, set the conference tone in her opening remarks, calling hybrid and digital modes of teaching and learning a central concern "to keep pace with learners' changing needs."

Panels and speakers addressed topics from "massive open online courses" (MOOCs) to mobile learning trends, and hybrid learning via Skype.

MOOCs are designed on a large scale for up to several thousand students, with free access to open-licence content with an open structure and learning goals. Such courses include traditional materials such as videotaped lectures, readings, and similar resources, as well as online forums and social media.

Learners access a MOOC by computer or mobile devices.

Some sources estimate there are more than one billion smartphone users, and the numbers are increasing, so more universities use smartphones, mobile devices, and tablets to enhance learning. MOOCs and tablets are the two top technologies featured this year in Canadian higher education, according to the NMC 2013 Horizon Report.

– M.E. Powell

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A SECOND CHANCE

WOODSWORTH COLLEGE BRIDGING PROGRAM

For some, the University of Toronto Woodsworth College academic bridging program is a way to integrate themselves into a post-secondary institution. But for others, it's a second chance.

Students at Woodsworth College come from all different backgrounds and circumstances, but their end goal is the same — to better their lives by seeking out a higher level of education.

"We have seen people really turn their lives around and we have seen them go onto do wonderful things," says Thomas Socknat, director of the academic bridging program.

The academic bridging program is the U of T's access program for the faculty of arts and science and is designed for adult students who may have never completed a university degree or do not meet university requirements for direct entry admission.

This program helps students bridge the gap from their prior education to what is needed to gain entry at the University of Toronto. Students who complete this program successfully will also be awarded a credit towards their degree.

Fourth-year U of T student Roberta Miggiani completed the academic bridging program in 2009 after she decided she wanted to attend university to get a bachelor of arts.

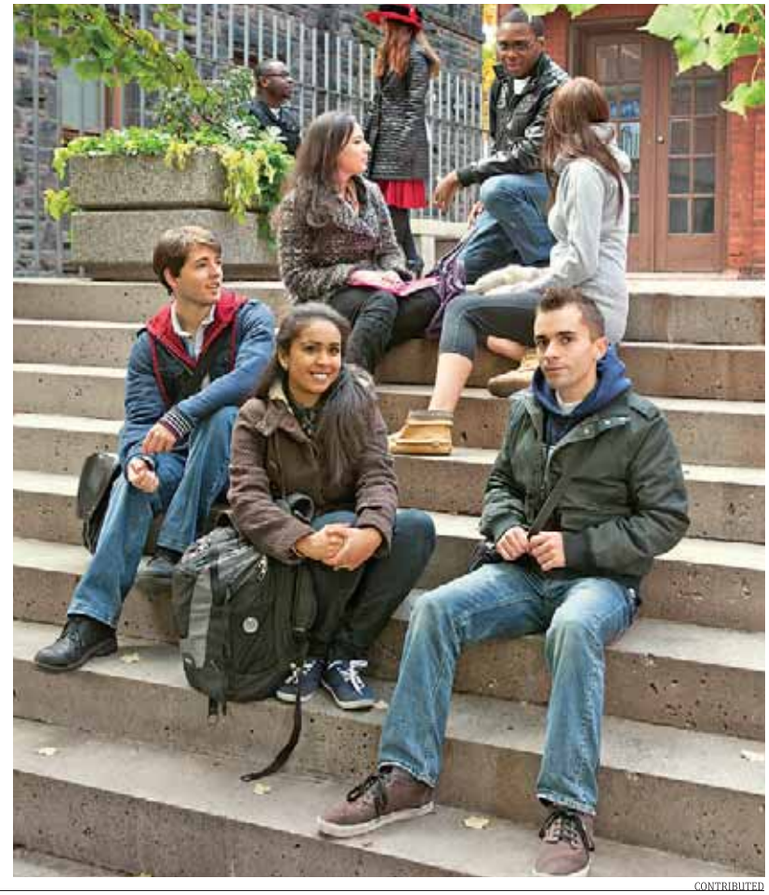
Although 29 when she enrolled in the program, Miggiani had already been successful in the business world, despite never graduating from high school.

"I had the experience, but no education," Miggiani says. "I wanted to demonstrate that I could perform at the university level as well as in the business world."

Now in her final year, she has been actively working with the university in the registrar's office and will be graduating with a bachelor of arts with a major in history.

The academic bridging program can be taken on a full- or part-time basis, depending on the needs of the student.

For more about the academic bridging program, visit wdw.utoronto.ca.



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It is now easier than ever to pursue a career as a business analyst (BA) thanks to the new online option to the business analysis certificate at Sheridan College.

Once an in-class only program, Sheridan's BA certificate is now available online.

"Having the option to complete their coursework online or attend evening and weekend classes eliminates the cost of taking time off work to advance their careers," says Jonathan Nituch, program co-ordinator for Sheridan's business analysis certificate.

Canada's Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC) predicts that the number of business analysts employed in Canada will increase to 171,000 by 2016, from 150,000 in 2011.

"What once fell into project management or programming is now becoming recognized as its own distinct field," Nituch says. "BAs help companies to understand and define problems and act as the integrators that bridge different functional areas to help solve them. They blend communication and interpersonal skills as well as technical expertise, business knowledge and corporate strategy to find solutions to issues that might impede an organization's success."

PRESSMASTER/COLOURBOX

Beyond the technology side of the equation, BAs are highly valued for their ability to ask the right questions so they can correctly identify the business problem at hand and create an effective solution.

Sheridan's program is designed for business analysts, project managers, operations managers, systems analysts, quality assurance analysts, marketing professionals, and anyone whose role is about defining, analyzing or solving business problems.

While many BAs work in the financial services industry, their boundary-spanning capabilities make their work relevant to practically any complex field, such as health care, policing, or retail.

Sheridan College is one of Canada's leading post-secondary institutions, offering more than 100 diploma, certificate, and bachelor degree programs in an environment that fosters innovation and creativity.

For more information about the business analysis certificate program visit, businessanalysis.sheridancollege.ca.

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AT UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO SCHOOL OF CONTINUING STUDIES

Although being your own boss may sound appealing to most, there is actually a lot of work and risk involved in starting or running your own business.

Minimize those risks by learning the ins and outs of being an entrepreneur with the certificate in entrepreneurship through the University of Toronto school of continuing studies.

"Our courses are designed to reflect a step-by-step journey an entrepreneur takes to build a business or venture," says Cindy Bettcher, director, business and professional studies.

"The program and its course activities and assignments will guide participants through critical strategic decisions associated with building a new business, as well as key business planning and implementation milestones."

The new certificate in entrepreneurship, offered in collaboration with MaRS Discovery District, is designed for budding entrepreneurs and those who are in the early stages of starting a business.

It provides the latest insights and practical tools to build a business faster and more successfully, and to minimize start-up risk.

Students will learn from successful entrepreneurs and industry experts from specific business disciplines, including market research, business planning, customer development, sales and marketing, human resources and managing financing, and apply the latest tools and strategies used by the world's most successful businesses to their own business.

"Starting a business allows you to pursue your passion," Bettcher says. "It allows individuals to create, rather than seek, a job."

The program is offered part time in an accessible evening format and for an accessible price, allowing participants to apply learning between sessions and to advance their own business or venture between courses.

"By offering the latest tools, strategic thinking in entrepreneurial management, and lots of feedback from industry experts, entrepreneurial peers, and successful entrepreneurs, our program provides an effective, safe environment to explore or test and build a business idea or venture," Bettcher says.

For more, visit learn.utoronto.ca/courses-programs/business-professionals/certificates/entrepreneurship.

PROGRAM IS FAST, FOCUSED AND FLEXIBLE

If you already have a successful career, or are looking to move up the corporate ladder, the leadership essentials certificate at the University of Toronto school of continuing studies will teach you the steps to make the right career moves.

"We designed the leadership essentials certificate program to be fast, focused and flexible and give people a professional edge quickly," says Lee McTavish, director, partnerships and professional programs. "The courses are short and practical, only five weeks in the evening, and a few of the courses are available in a two-day format as well."

McTavish says employers want and need people to step up to leadership.

No matter what your role, you can be a leader and make change happen by thinking critically, getting people on board, communicating effectively, planning ahead and knowing how to handle difficult situations skillfully. This program will give you the skills to be a leader.

"Students learn practical soft skills and knowledge they can apply right away," McTavish says.

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Students find it is easy to fit this program into their busy professional lives. Whether they are looking to complete the whole certificate, or narrow in on one particular topic, this program gives them the option to learn the leadership skills that will meet their specific needs.

"People can take just one course, or successfully complete six to earn the certificate from the University of Toronto school of continuing studies," McTavish says.

The courses are accessible, registration is easy and there are no entrance requirements. The courses are available on all three U of T campuses.

For more, visit learn.utoronto.ca.

LECTURE SERIES

Critical analysis, provocative ideas and thoughtful insights are presented in the University of Toronto school of continuing studies university lecture series.

Leading scholars, thinkers and experts tackle an eclectic range of topics in history, art, politics, religion, health, and public affairs.

Speakers this fall will include historian Carolyn Harris on Peter the Great, political scientist Roberta Rice on indigenous activism in Latin America, columnist Bruce Bell on the most influential people in Toronto's history, and artist Doug Purdon on a visit to the studios of Rembrandt and Vermeer.

A brief question-and-answer period follows each presentation.

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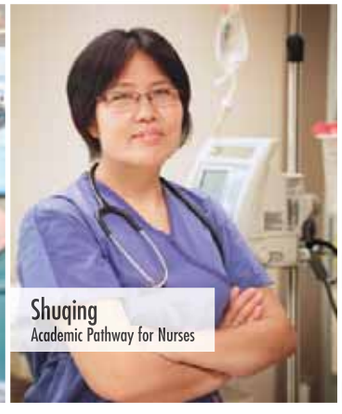

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ENHANCE SKILLS AT WORK AND IN LIFE

AT THE CANADIAN BUSINESS COLLEGE

Canadian Business College offers continuing education courses aimed to help individuals enhance their skills in the work environment, as well as in practical aspects of life.

"Whether you are seeking training to advance your career, you'd like to make a career change or you are following a personal interest, Canadian Business College continuing education courses are a nice complement to our diploma programs," says John Nelson, president and CEO of Canadian Business College. "Our courses are professionally relevant and are taught by the same top industry experts that lead our diploma programs."

For example, the intense negotiations course teaches the Harvard negotiation method and is perfect for students who are currently taking or who have graduated from the Canadian Business College's paralegal or law clerk programs.

The course furthers a student's knowledge in this specific area and provides them with the confidence to negotiate effectively with clients and other legal practitioners in court, litigation and mediation scenarios.

It's also a practical course for anyone who wants to put together an effective sales presentation, ask for a raise, or even just divide tasks between co-workers or family members without arguments.

Another example is the Adobe Photoshop continuing ed course, which complements Canadian Business College's digital media, web design, marketing, and business courses. It's an intensive course for anyone in the creative side of business who needs to sharpen their skills and bolster their portfolio with one of the most sophisticated pieces of photo editing software in the industry.

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Whether you are looking for a better understanding of graphic design, need to create invitations, newsletters, emails or a blog, or want to improve your photos to help preserve great memories of family and friends, this course will satisfy your desire to create.

Continuing education courses take place at the Canadian Business College Toronto campus, located in the heart of downtown at Bloor and Yonge.

For more information about Canadian Business College, visit the website at canadianbusinesscollege.com.

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GAIN KNOWLEDGE AND CONFIDENCE

WITH LANGUAGE TRAINING PROGRAM

VITCHANAN/COLOURBOX

For two women new to Canada, the occupation-specific language training program (OSLT) helped them gain the knowledge and confidence to head into the workforce in the fields for which they were trained.

When Lorena Rodriguez and her son arrived from Mexico last year in search of a better life in Canada, she was looking for a way to secure a job in public relations — the field she had been working in for two years prior.

"The most difficult thing was not knowing anyone in the Canadian workplace because it is all about networking," Rodriguez says.

When Rodriguez found out about the OSLT program at Humber College, she knew this would be the best first step to network with others like herself and develop the language skills necessary to work in the PR field in Canada.

Because of the training she received through the OSLT program, she learned how to start her job search properly and now feels confident in the Canadian workplace.

Rodriguez is also looking forward to her new position in PR at Ryerson in the fall.

When Hina Shaikh, a physiotherapist from Pakistan, and her family moved to Canada last year, also seeking a safer life, she knew she would need to seek out workplace specific language training to help her find a job in her field.

Shaikh enrolled in the OSLT at George Brown College, where she learned the proper workplace procedures and communication skills needed for being a physiotherapist in Canada.

She now says she feels confident and familiar with the system and is employed as a physiotherapist.

Shaikh says the freedom to be herself in Canada was what made this country an attractive option, and the self-assurance she received in the OSLT program has only added to her new Canadian lifestyle.

"I really appreciate the efforts they made for all of us students," Shaikh says.

OSLT classes are funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada and are free for eligible participants (immigrants who are permanent residents or protected persons) who have training or experience in a particular occupation or sector but need to improve their occupation-specific communication skills.

For more about this program and participating colleges, visit co-oslt.org.

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AT THE CHANG SCHOOL AT RYERSON

Davina Ramnarine

Although Davina Ramnarine already held an honours bachelor of business administration (BBA) specialized in marketing and international business, and held a successful job, watching those around her in public relations sparked a passion to pursue a career change.

"I found their roles very interesting, and wanted to learn more about PR, to determine if it was the right fit for the next stage of my career," Ramnarine says.

So Ramnarine enrolled at The Chang School at Ryerson University, and tested the waters by taking two courses before enrolling in the certificate in public relations.

"This allowed me to assess whether the program and, more generally, the field was right for me," Ramnarine says. "I really like that The Chang School allows you to 'test drive' a program before committing to the certificate."

Ramnarine is now an assistant consultant, corporate communications, Hill+Knowlton Strategies.

"I really appreciate my program's flexibility," Ramnarine says. "The Chang School offers both online courses and in-class courses on evenings, so I'm able to fit classes around my work schedule and maintain my full-time job."

Like Ramnarine, many of the students who seek out continuing education courses at The Chang School do so to create a more enjoyable work life.

"Do what you love," says Marie Bountrogianni, interim dean, Ryerson University's The G. Raymond Chang school of continuing education. "Finding a way to incorporate your passion into your every day work life will make you a happier person and worker."

Continuing education at The Chang School is an excellent way to brush up on your skills, or learn new ones, and network with like-minded professionals.

The school has flexible, accessible programming that is available to suit the busy lives of working adults. Courses are available on campus, during evenings and weekends and via distance education.

For more, visit ryerson.ca/ce.

1,500 COURSES

The Chang School offers 1,500 courses, where 80 per cent are degree credit, as well as seminars and workshops that can help with career advancement or to break into a new career. In addition, the school has 93 career-related certificate programs, 20 of which can be completed entirely through online learning.

CONTINUING EDUCATION IMPORTANT FOR INNOVATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES

A recent Conference Board of Canada report says innovation depends in part on having a labour force with advanced skills to develop new technologies, but also to use new technologies.

That makes continuing education increasingly important in today's world to help complete degrees or certificates and to enhance skills.

By using technology for registration and course delivery, continuing education departments encourage participation within their respective university populations and service areas, and reach out to adult students and businesses across the country.

According to a study of Online Learning in Canada, between 875,000 and 950,000 students at colleges and universities study a purely online course at any one time.

For those seeking online opportunities, provincial directories compile links to programs and courses. OntarioLearn.com partners 24 Ontario colleges that offer online learning, for example, and ecampusAlberta.ca lists some 800 online courses and 70 programs at 16 Alberta post-secondary institutions.

– M.E. Powell

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CAREER DREAMS DO COME TRUE

For as long as Aaron Crawford could remember, his dream was to become a police officer, but he always knew it was going to take a lot of hard work and a competitive education.

After receiving a college diploma in police foundations, he began looking into courses he could complete while still maintaining full-time employment.

"I researched a variety of study options from several colleges and found the programs at Humber College to be the most affordable, accessible and, above all, relevant to the field I was pursuing," Crawford says.

Mohammad Azmat Latif

He began by completing an investigators certificate and then continued on to a study of human behaviour certificate.

"In 2011, my dream finally came true and I was hired by Peel regional police as a police constable," Crawford says. "I owe a large part of my success to Humber's continuing education programs, which have allowed me to pursue continuous learning while still earning a living and gaining valuable work experience."

Crawford is only one of the many Humber students who has found success in a field that they love after completing one of the many Humber school of social and community services programs.

Mohammad Azmat Latif, graduated with a gerontology graduate certificate after moving his family to Canada from Italy to seek out a better lifestyle.

He started working for a number of retail-related companies, but was not satisfied with what he was doing.

In 2010, he decided to upgrade his education and joined the gerontology program at Humber College.

"Humber has a unique way of teaching and enhancing the confidence levels of its students, and each and every single one of the teachers/professors has an amazing teaching style," Latif says.

Latif is currently working for India Rainbow Community Services of Peel as an activity co-ordinator, and an active member(volunteer) of the Bramalea Community Health Centre and a volunteer for Cancer Research Project for South Asians.

Humber school of social and community services offers a number of full- and part-time programs aimed at careers that make a difference in society.

For more, visit communityservices.humber.ca.

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THE NEXT LEVEL

HONE SOCIAL MEDIA SKILLS AT GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE

CONTRIBUTED

"Like" this, Tweet that, hashtag every word and phrase imaginable — not only has social media invaded everyone's lives, but it is now an essential tool in the business world as well.

If you are a social media junkie, or still new to this rapidly growing phenomena, keep yourself up to speed on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube to take your business to the next level.

"Fortunately, most professionals now realize that it's impossible to completely ignore an entire communications channel," says Claire Kerr, social media community management instructor and director of digital philanthropy at Artez Interactive.

"What we're finding is that employers are less likely to be hiring for staff who focus only on print or offline strategies. Employers are looking for candidates with a diverse skill set."

The social media marketing certificate program at George Brown College gives students the skills they need to design and manage effective integrated marketing, advocacy or advertising campaigns involving social media networks.

The individual courses take a hands-on approach, teaching students how to create and evaluate projects on established social networks like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube, as well as emerging ones like Instagram, Pinterest and Tumblr.

"The aim of the certificate program is to prepare students to be leaders in social spaces, rather than a person just updating the company's Twitter account," Kerr says.

Laurie Taniguchi, a graduate of this certificate, credits the program with helping her perform better at her current job.

"Having worked at the St. Alban's Boys and Girls Club for seven years, I have played an instrumental part in setting up the social media strategy for the organization and have enjoyed it so much that I enrolled in the social media certificate program at George Brown," Taniguchi says. "I am passionate about social media and using these tools for the benefit of the organizations I work for."

Five of the social media marketing certificate courses are now available as online courses as well as in class.

For more information about this program, visit coned.georgebrown.ca/social.

GET STRAIGHT TO THE POINT

It was after a friend's wedding when Tiffany Zhang — who had done the hair, makeup and nails for a number of girls — began to think she could do that for a career.

Zhang, now an esthetician and skin specialist at Elmwood Spa, began researching programs to find the right school that would give her the most well-rounded education.

"I looked at different colleges, but the courses were not specific enough," Zhang says. "George Brown College's school of makeup and esthetics got straight to the point."

Zhang completed the esthetician and medical spa therapist certificate at the beginning of July and started her job at the spa not long after.

"The curriculum and courses taught me everything I needed to learn and my instructor covered everything so I was prepared to go out into the workforce," Zhang says. "The instructors were always there for us students."

The esthetician and medical spa therapist certificate consists of nine courses and covers everything an individual needs to work in a spa or salon environment.

"We want to make sure our students know what to expect when they get out into the workplace, regardless of where they end up," says Vanessa Fernandes, esthetics instructor at the school of makeup and esthetics.

Fernandes says the certificate can be completed in a number of ways — full time in three to nine months, or part time, depending on the student's schedule.

Portions of the certificate can also be taken separately. Students may register and pay on a course-by-course basis and then apply their courses towards a certificate.

Two new certificate programs were launched in September 2012 — body treatment therapist, and skin care therapist.

Students will get the chance to work one-on-one with real clients through the school's specialized studios, giving them the chance to utilize their practical skills and business skills that would be mirrored in a real salon or spa.

CONTRIBUTED

Esthetician and medical spa therapist certificate students will complete more than 260 hours of clinical work in the spa.

For more about George Brown College's school of makeup and esthetics, visit coned.georgebrown.ca/esthetics.

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"Event planning is one of today's hottest and most exciting careers, and York University is proud to offer our redesigned event planning and management certificate program," says Alan Goldhar, course director, York University. "York's event planning program is designed to provide students with a masterful mix of theory and practice in event management and business practices for the event planning professional."

Program instructors are industry and business experts and will pass along the best practices and essential knowledge.

Students will learn to use the latest technology to create floor plans and magazine-worthy décor.

"Whether you are new to the profession or a seasoned event planner seeking to upgrade your skills, we are certain that our program will cater to all of your needs," Goldhar says.

The program is designed for experienced post-secondary students since admission requirements include an undergraduate degree or college diploma and a minimum of one year of full-time experience in utilizing event planning techniques.

For more, or to apply for the Oct. 14 start, visit coned.yorku.ca/event.

ENHANCING THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

When Brett McCollum's students came to class last year, about 80 per cent brought smartphones and tablets with them.

"So the idea is to take the technology they're bringing with them and getting them to use it in an educational way, rather than sitting at their desk and text messaging each other," McCollum says.

The Mount Royal (Calgary) University chemistry professor, a Nexen scholar and one of only 50 Apple distinguished scholars from Canada, asked his 60 students to pair up. Approaching it as a scientist, he divided them into two groups, asking one group to use their tablets, while the other didn't.

Students using the free Molecules app demonstrated a 30 per cent increase in their ability to identify matching compounds, after only 15 minutes of structured tablet use.

"It really becomes a profound tool for us to be able to see the shape of molecules you can't see with the naked eye," McCollum says.

He will be expanding on the idea this year.

"Even with the small class sizes, it is impractical to invite every student to work on the board at the front of the room," McCollum adds. "With multiple groups displaying their tablet screens at the same time, we can have class-wide interactive discussions on their work in progress."

The use of tablets in the classroom is one of the top two trends in higher education across the country, according to the NMC Horizon Report, to help students engage with the material and with the process of learning. *– M.E. Powell*

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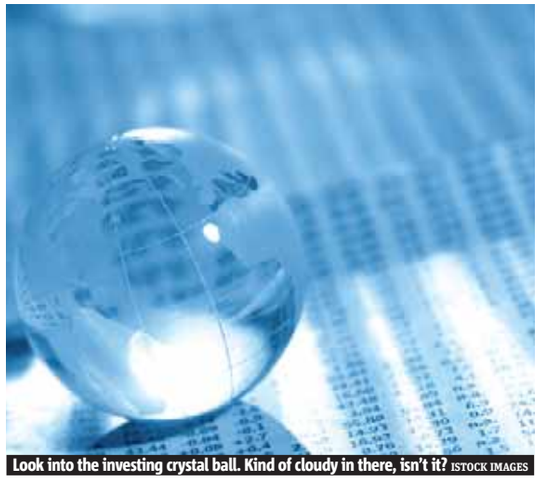

Look into the investing crystal ball. Kind of cloudy in there, isn't it? ISTOCK IMAGES

Mr. Top 10, as I'll call him, isn't a fan of mine.

"What success, (if any) have you had investing? My investments show in excess of 20 per cent average this year!! What are your top picks?"

Mr. Top 10 (MTT) went on to castigate me for recommending GICs to an elderly, nervous investor and for not offering more stock and mutual fund recommendations.

Certainly you can find a gazillion "pickers" with tremendous success in a given year. MTT's Canadian and U.S. funds have had a very nice run and I commend him. However, a single year isn't illustrative.

It's more important to be a well-behaved investor than focus on short-term winners. Here's how:

Allocate your assets

Pick an asset allocation (AA) that divides your money among equities (stocks, exchange-traded funds or equity mutual funds), bonds and cash. Don't worry if everyone says you should be heavy into the stock market because bonds and cash return little. Next year things may be quite different.

A portfolio with cash and bonds is buffered when the market heads south. And one day interest rates will rise.

Diversify

MTT's U.S. investments have done well over eight months, but who knows what the next eight will bring? That's why it's important to diversify within the equity categories. Don't fling money into dozens of niche sectors and all over the world.

A mix of larger company Canadian, U.S. and global stocks, ETFs or mutual funds will do you just fine.

Dollar Cost Average

Invest regularly. No, you won't always buy at the bottom, however you reduce the risk of committing too much money at the top. Getting an average price over time is the goal here.

Rebalance

Once you've decided on an asset allocation it's critical to stick with it, even when one aspect of your portfolio is taking off.

Examine your AA annually or so and rebalance back to those percentages if they're out of whack. You can use new contributions to do this rather than selling.

The problem with Mr. Top 10's approach is that you can have the best stocks or funds at any given time, but end up with a disastrous portfolio in the long run if you don't practise good investor behaviour.

Contact Alison at griffiths.alison@gmail.com or alisongriffiths.ca

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How to save over $1,000 on car insurance

Making a few changes could save drivers hundreds, even thousands.

Car insurance is mandatory for all drivers, but overpaying is not. Most drivers are looking to reduce their insurance premiums; fortunately, there are many ways that Canadian drivers can save on their car insurance. Renewal time is a great time to find savings, but it is not the only time. You can find savings at any point with many insurance companies – and the savings could far outweigh any cancellation costs. Read through these top tips to learn how to save over $1,000 on car insurance.

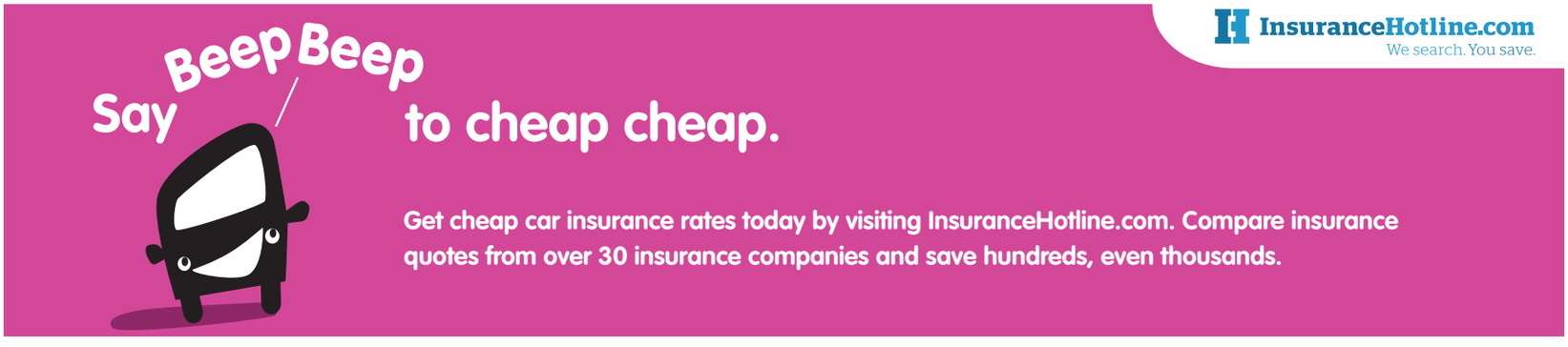
Shop around for car insurance quotes – just like the title says, shop around. Pay far less than currently paying with the existing car insurance company. Each insurance company charges different rates to insure the same driver, with the same driving record and the same company. It's important to check out all options before renewing or at any point during the year. The most common ways to shop around for insurance quotes is to either call each insurance company or shop online for quotes. Online quoting sites like InsuranceHotline.com will provide the lowest rate available, compared against over 30 insurance companies.

Look for discounts on insurance policy – there are many discounts available. To name a few: Installing winter tires or anti-theft devices and good driver discounts. Ask the insurance company for a list of available discounts and apply the applicable discounts to the policy for extra savings. Many drivers are unaware that discounts exist, so be sure to take full advantage of these.

Increase the deductible – by increasing deductibles, especially on collision coverage, drivers typically see a lower insurance rate. Some drivers are afraid to increase their deductible, as they will have to pay more up-front in the event of an at-fault car accident; but, the deductible is paid only in an at-fault accident). If driving without at an-fault accident for a few years, the cost of the increased premium will have been saved with a lower deductible.

Other ways to save – for even more savings, combine home and car insurance policies with the same insurance company. Many insurance companies offer up to 10% off premiums the two policies are bundled. Also ask the insurance company if there is a discount for paying the premium in full instead of monthly. Commute distance also affects insurance rates. In most cases, not significantly, but each factor can add up to a higher rate. Take a look at the daily commute and if convenient, try taking public transportation, subway, or even carpooling.

These tips should help drivers should see a lower car insurance premium.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Jays break free from Yankees' stranglehold

MLB. Toronto opens homestand by beating Bronx Bombers for the first time in last 11 tries

R.A. Dickey picked up his 10th win of the season and slugger Edwin Encarnacion drove in a pair of runs as the Toronto Blue Jays kicked off a six-game homestand with a 5-2 win over the New York Yankees on Monday night.

Dickey (10-12) allowed one earned run and six hits over 6 1/3 innings to help Toronto (59-73) post its first victory over New York in 11 games. Jose Reyes scored twice and Casey Janssen worked the ninth inning for his 24th save.

The Blue Jays broke a 2-2 tie with three runs in the fifth inning, more than enough support for Dickey and three Toronto relievers.

Alex Rodriguez hit his 650th career homer for the Yankees (69-62), who entered play 3 1/2 games out of a wild-card spot. Phil Hughes (4-13) shouldered the loss.

Toronto put runners on the corners in the bottom half of the fifth after a Reyes double and a single by Ryan Goins. Encarnacion hit a drive to right field that a backpedalling Ichiro Suzuki couldn't haul in by the warning track.

Reyes scored on the error and Adam Lind followed by lashing another ball into right to push Goins across. After an intentional walk to Lawrie, Moises Sierra hit a sacrifice fly that scored Encarnacion. THE CANADIAN PRESS

On Monday

Blue Jays	Yankees
5	2

Jose Reyes evades a tag by Yankees catcher Austin Romine to score on Monday at Rogers Centre. FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Gibbons stays cool despite calls for his head

If some columnists in Toronto get their way, John Gibbons won't be managing the Blue Jays for much longer. SCOTT HALLERAN/GETTY IMAGES

Toronto Blue Jays manager John Gibbons leaned back in his chair Monday afternoon, spat some chewing tobacco juice into a cup and smiled as he answered questions from the dozen reporters gathered in his office for a pre-game media availability.

Gibbons knows most of the scribes by name and is quick with a joke and a laugh. He seemed as relaxed as ever, even though the optimism that reigned here last spring is long gone.

The Blue Jays are mired in last place in the American League East and are playing out the string on what playoff-starved Toronto fans had hoped would be a turnaround year.

Some columnists have written that the time is right for a managerial change, while calls to the local all-sports radio stations have been getting angrier by the day. Gibbons has been an easy target given that his club took a poor 58-73 record into Monday's series opener against New York.

Naturally Gibbons is disappointed that his team has underperformed. But he doesn't seem the least bit bothered by the stories or calls for him to be replaced.

"I don't get into what's fair and what's unfair," Gibbons said in his friendly Texan drawl. "It's a tough business, man, and you're in the arena. So it's open season. So have at it, I guess you could say." THE CANADIAN PRESS

US Open

Bouchard and Dancevic get past opening round

Canadians Eugenie Bouchard and Frank Dancevic won opening matches within seconds of one another to advance into the second round of the US Open on Monday.

Bouchard, of Montreal, managed to find a way past Czech Karolina Pliskova 4-6, 6-4, 7-5 to win in her US Open main draw debut. Dancevic, a product of Niagara Falls, defeated Robin Haase of the Netherlands 7-6(5), 3-6, 7-5, 7-6(7). THE CANADIAN PRESS

NFL

Bills' top corner breaks wrist

Buffalo Bills cornerback Stephon Gilmore will miss six to eight weeks with a broken left wrist.

Coach Doug Marrone provided the update Monday, two days after Gilmore was hurt in a 30-7 preseason loss to Washington. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NBA

T-Mac says he won't come back

Tracy McGrady says he is retiring from the NBA.

The seven-time All-Star announced his decision on ESPN and Twitter on Monday morning. McGrady spent 16 seasons in the NBA playing for the Raptors, Magic, Rockets, Knicks, Pistons and Hawks. He finished his career last season by signing with the San Antonio Spurs late in the year. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
You will find favour with colleagues and employers over the next few days but it is up to you to make something of it. Let them know you want to work as part of a team.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
You want to get away, so what's stopping you? Get out of that nine-to-five mindset and start making plans that take you to new places — as far away from where you are now as possible.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
There will be a clash of egos today and it has been coming for quite some time. Say what you have to say, but don't forget you have to work with this person every day.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You must be honest about your feelings, even if it makes you feel vulnerable. You actually have nothing to worry about. The responses you get from loved ones will confirm they are very much on your side.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Money issues may be front and centre now but in the greater scheme of things they are somewhat trivial, so don't fuss about them too much. It's love that makes the world go around, not dollars and cents.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Friends will deny you nothing over the next few days, so you might as well ask for what pleases you most. Bear in mind though that one day they may ask something similar of you, so don't be too outrageous.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Treat others the way you'd like to be treated. That's good advice any time but never more so than now as the words you speak and the actions you take will have huge repercussions.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
If you play with fire, you must expect to get burned. You may have thought you were going to get away with something but today's events will awaken you to reality. Causes always, but always, have consequences.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You seem to be in one of those moods where money is no object, despite the fact that your resources are low. If you do spend too much, don't be too hard on yourself.

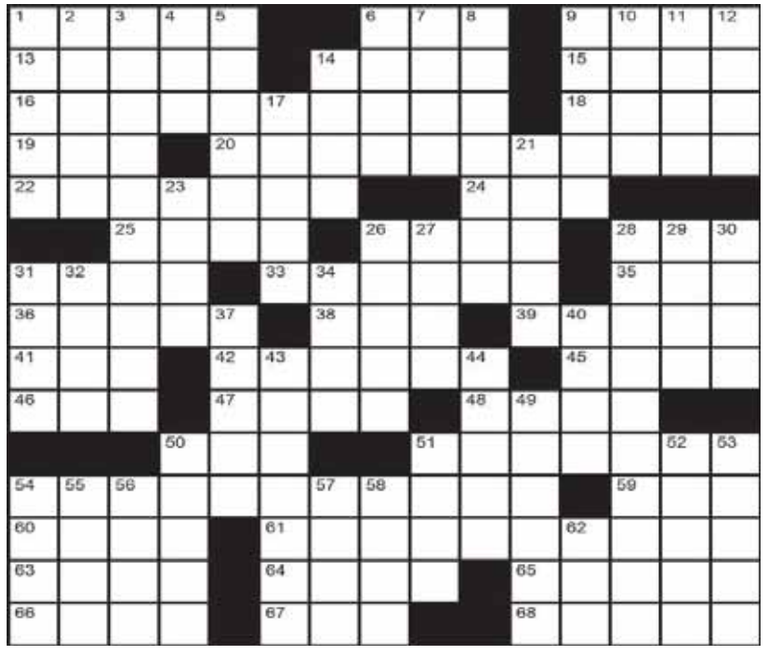
♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You need to be with people who excite you mentally. There are so many superficial people out there — identify them and give them a miss.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Whether you're a realist or a dreamer, you will have to make some no-nonsense choices today. Your heart may be in the right place but if your head is on another planet you won't achieve much.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
The Sun opposes your ruler Neptune today, which among other things suggests that someone will challenge the way you look at the world. Don't let them put doubts in your mind. The world is what you want it to be. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

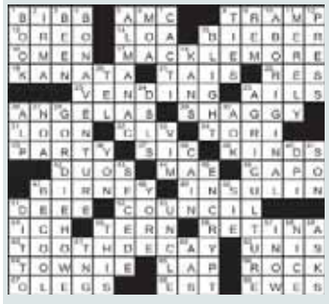
See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Briefly summarize
6. "__ Wolf" (1947)
9. Apple variety
13. "...and forgive __ __ trespasses..."
14. Mr. LaBeouf
15. The Drifters hit: "__ the Roof": 2 wds.
16. Wild West transport
18. Whispery word
19. Ship signal
20. East Coast exports: acr. + word
22. Choices
24. Half of Ms. Gabor
25. Mannered man
26. Nevada 'aliens site', __ 51
28. Feasted
31. Glum
33. Father of New France, __ de Champlain
35. Prospector's find
36. Late night's Mr. Ferguson
38. __ Gatos, California
39. Donald Duck nephew
41. "Bad Moon Rising" gr.
42. Seaport of Italy
45. Curves
46. Bad guy
47. Basilica part
48. Recreation spot, in Quebec
50. Egyptian cobra
51. Revere
54. Burnaby, BC born musician from an eponymously-titled Band: 2 wds.
59. __ Beach, Hawaii
60. "What's __ for me?": 2 wds.
61. Art __ (b.1912 - d.2010, Radio/TV host in The States from Moose Jaw)
63. __-Flush
64. Pasturelands
65. Montreal's __-Dame Basilica
66. Canadian politics channel
67. 'Persist' suffix
68. Fall fabric

Down
1. 1904 to 1905: __-Japanese War
2. Impede, in law
3. CCG = Canadian __ __
4. Pre-Sept. month
5. "That '70s Show" actress Laura
6. Bloke
7. Puerto's follower
8. Classic five dice game
9. Dr. Sanjay __ (CNN's Chief Medical Correspondent)
10. Lhasa __ (Small dog)
11. Shake off
12. New Wave's Adam and The __
14. Kate Bush song: "And __ __ Love"
17. Loonie parts
21. "__ __ of you are aware..." (Manager-to-staff speech opener)
23. Yesterday, in Italy
26. Arcade game, Whac-_-__
27. Sly tactic
28. Fork, in a Montreal restaurant
29. Julia Roberts' actor brother
30. Kiki and Sandra
31. Gladiator's 800
32. Killer whale
34. The __ (Famous mountains)
37. Grind teeth together
40. Rowboat needs
43. Qu'__ Valley (Region of southern Saskatchewan)
44. Thread holder
49. Enthusiastic
50. House's accessed-by-ladder spot
51. Bowl-shaped pans
52. Gladys Knight & The Pips hit: "If _ __ Your Woman"
53. Peeled
54. Catchall category [abbr.]
55. Have _ __ (Zzzzz...)
56. Ms. Turner
57. Vienna, to Austrians
58. Fly type
62. __ truck

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

8		5				1		7
	7	6	2		5	3	4	
2								5
			8		7			
	5			4			9	
			5		1			
7								4
	9	2	6		4	8	3	
6		3				2		9

Yesterday's Sudoku

2	1	3	7	4	8	9	6	5
5	9	4	2	3	6	1	7	8
6	8	7	1	9	5	2	3	4
8	7	5	3	1	4	6	9	2
1	3	9	6	8	2	5	4	7
4	6	2	5	7	9	8	1	3
3	2	8	9	6	7	4	5	1
9	4	1	8	5	3	7	2	6
7	5	6	4	2	1	3	8	9

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Wednesday
28°/18°
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